LIFE

OF

NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.

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THE

LIFE

OF

NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE,

EMPEROR OF THE FRENCH.

WITH A

Preliminary View of the French Revolution.

BY SIR WALTER SCOTT.

——————Sed non in Cæsare tantum
Nomen erat, nec fama ducis, sed nescia virtus
Stare loco, solusque pudor non vincere bello.
Acer et indomitus, quo spes, quoque ira vocasset,
Ferre manum, et nunquam temerando parcere ferro.
Successus urgere suos, instare favori
Numinis, impellens quidquid sibi summa petenti
Obstaret, gaudensque viam fecisse ruina.

LUCANI *Pharsalia*, Lib. I.

IN NINE VOLUMES.

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LIFE

OF

NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.

CHAPTER I.

Change which took place in Napoleon's Domestic Life, after the Peace of Presburg—Causes which led to it—His anxiety for an Heir—A Son of his brother Louis is fixed upon, but dies in Childhood.—Character and Influence of Joséphine—Strong mutual attachment betwixt her and Napoleon.—Fouché opens to Joséphine the Plan of a Divorce—her extreme Distress—On 5th December, Napoleon announces her Fate to Joséphine.—On 15th they are formally separated before the Imperial Council—Joséphine retaining the rank of Empress for life.—Espousals of Buonaparte and Maria Louisa of Austria take place at Vienna, 11th March, 1810.—Comparison, and Contrast, betwixt Joséphine and her Successor.—The Results of this Union different from what was expected.—Foreseen by the Emperor Alexander.

THERE is perhaps no part of the varied life of the wonderful person of whom we treat,

more deeply interesting, than the change which took place in his domestic establishment, shortly after the peace of Presburg. The main causes of that change are strongly rooted in human nature, but there were others which arose out of Napoleon's peculiar situation. The desire of posterity—of being represented long after our own earthly career is over, by those who derive their life and condition in society from us, is proper to our species. In all ages and countries, children are accounted a blessing, barrenness a misfortune at least, if not a curse. This desire of maintaining a posthumous connexion with the world, through the medium of our descendants, is increased, when there is property or rank to be inherited; and, however vain the thought, there are few to which men cling with such sincere fondness, as the prospect of bequeathing to their children's children the fortunes they have inherited from their fathers, or acquired by their own industry. There is kindness as well as some vanity in the feeling; for the attachment which we bear to the children whom we see and love, naturally carries itself to their lineage, whom we may never see. The love of distant posterity is in some degree the metaphysics of natural affection.

It was impossible that the founder of so vast an empire as that of Napoleon could be insensible to a feeling which is so deeply graft-

ed in our nature, as to influence the most petty proprietor of a house and a few acres— it is of a character to be felt in proportion to the extent of the inheritance; and so viewed, there never existed in the world before, and, it is devoutly to be hoped, will never be again permitted by Providence to arise, a power so extensive, so formidable as Napoleon's. Immense as it was, it had been, moreover, the work of his own talents; and, therefore, he must have anticipated, with the greater pain, that the system perfected by so much labour and blood, should fall to pieces on the death of him by whom it had been erected, or that the reins of empire should be grasped after that event « by some unlineal hand, »

No son of his succeeding.

The drop of gall, which the poet describes so naturally as embittering the cup of the Usurper of Scotland, infused, there is no doubt, its full bitterness into that of Napoleon.

The sterility of the Empress Joséphine was now rendered, by the course of nature, an irremediable evil, over which she mourned in hopeless distress; and conscious on what precarious circumstances the continuance of their union seemed now to depend, she gave way occasionally to fits of jealousy, less excited, according to Napoleon, by personal attachment, than by suspicion that her influence over

her husband's mind might be diminished, in case of his having offspring by some paramour.

She turned her thoughts to seek a remedy, and exerted her influence over her husband to induce him to declare some one his successor, according to the unlimited powers vested in him by the Imperial constitution. In the selection, she naturally endeavoured to direct his choice towards his step-son, Eugène Beauharnais, her own son by her first marriage; but this did not meet Buonaparte's approbation. A child, the son of his brother Louis, by Hortense Beauharnais, appeared, during its brief existence, more likely to become the destined heir of this immense inheritance. Napoleon seemed attached to the boy; and when he manifested any spark of childish spirit, rejoiced in the sound of the drum, or showed pleasure in looking upon arms and the image of war, he is said to have exclaimed,— « *There* is a child fit to succeed, perhaps to surpass me. »

The fixing his choice on an heir so intimately connected with herself, would have secured the influence of Joséphine, as much as it could receive assurance from any thing save bearing her husband issue herself; but she was not long permitted to enjoy this prospect The son of Louis and Hortense died of a disorder incident to childhood; and thus was broken, while yet a twig, the shoot, that, grow-

ing to maturity, might have been reckoned on as the stay of an empire. Napoleon showed the deepest grief, but Joséphine sorrowed as one who had no hope.

Yet, setting aside her having the misfortune to bear him no issue, the claims of Joséphine on her husband's affections were as numerous as could be possessed by a wife. She had shared his more lowly fortunes, and, by her management and address during his absence in Egypt, had paved the way for the splendid success which he had attained on his return. She had also done much to render his government popular, by softening the sudden and fierce bursts of passion to which his temperament induced him to give way. No one could understand, like Joséphine, the peculiarities of her husband's temper,—no one dared, like her, to encounter his displeasure, rather than not advise him for his better interest,—no one could possess such opportunities of watching the fit season for intercession,—and no one, it is allowed on all hands, made a more prudent, or a more beneficent use of the opportunities she enjoyed. The character of Buonaparte, vehement by temper, a soldier by education, and invested by Fortune with the most despotic power, required peculiarly the moderating influence of such a mind, which could interfere without intrusion, and remonstrate without offence.

To maintain this influence over her husband, Joséphine made not only unreluctantly, but eagerly, the greatest personal sacrifices. In all the rapid journeys which he performeu, she was his companion. No obstacle of road or weather was permitted to interfere with her departure. However sudden the call, the Empress was ever ready; however untimely the hour, her carriage was in instant attendance. The influence which she maintained by the sacrifice of her personal comforts was used for the advancement of her husband's best interests,—the relief of those who were in distress, and the averting the consequences of hasty resolutions, formed in a moment of violence or irritation.

Besides her considerable talents, and her real beneficence of disposition, Joséphine was possessed of other ties over the mind of her husband. The mutual passion which had subsisted between them for many years, if its warmth had subsided, seems to have left behind affectionate remembrances and mutual esteem. The grace and dignity with which Joséphine played her part in the Imperial pageant was calculated to gratify the pride of Napoleon, which might have been shocked at seeing the character of Empress discharged with less ease and adroitness; for her temper and manners enabled her, as one early accustomed to the society of persons of political in-

fluence, to conduct herself with singular dexterity in the intrigues of the splendid and busy court, where she filled so important a charac-

Lastly, it is certain that Buonaparte, who, like many of those that affect to despise superstition, had a reserve of it in his own bosom, believed that his fortunes were indissolubly connected with those of Joséphine; and loving her as she deserved to be beloved, he held his union with her the more intimate, that there was attached to it, he thought, a spell affecting his own destinies, which had ever seemed most predominant when they had received the recent influence of Joséphine's presence.

Notwithstanding all these mutual ties, it was evident to the politicians of the Tuileries, that whatever attachment and veneration for the Empress Napoleon might profess and feel, it was likely in the long-run to give way to the eager desire of a lineal succession, to which he might bequeath his splendid inheritance. As age advanced, every year weakened, though in an imperceptible degree, the influence of the Empress, and must have rendered more eager the desire of her husband to form a new alliance, while he was yet at a period of life enabling him to hope he might live to train to maturity the expected heir.

Fouché, the Minister of Police, the boldest political intriguer of his time, discovered spec-

dily to what point the Emperor must ultimately arrive, and seems to have meditated the insuring his own power and continuance in favour, by taking the initiative in a measure, in which, perhaps, Napoleon might be ashamed to break the ice in person. Sounding artfully his master's disposition, Fouché was able to discover that the Emperor was struggling betwixt the supposed political advantages to be derived from a new matrimonial union on the one hand, and, on the other, love for his present consort, habits of society which particularly attached him to Joséphine, and the species of superstition which we have already noticed. Having been able to conjecture the state of the Emperor's inclinations, the crafty counsellor determined to make Joséphine herself the medium of suggesting to Buonaparte the measure of her own divorce, and his second marriage, as a sacrifice necessary to consolidate the empire, and complete the happiness of the Emperor.

One morning at Fontainebleau, as the Empress was returning from mass, Fouché detained her in the embrasure of a window in the gallery, while, with an audacity almost incomprehensible, he explained, with all the alleviating qualifications his ingenuity could suggest, the necessity of a sacrifice, which he represented as equally sublime and inevitable. The tears gathered in Joséphine's eyes—her

colour came and went—her lips swelled—and the least which the counsellor had to fear, was his advice having brought on a severe nervous affection. She commanded her emotions, however, sufficiently to ask Fouché, with a faltering voice, whether he had any commission to hold such language to her. He replied in the negative, and said that he had only ventured on such an insinuation from his having predicted with certainty what must necessarily come to pass; and from his desire to turn her attention to what so nearly concerned her glory and happiness.

In consequence of this interview, an impassioned and interesting scene is said to have taken place betwixt Buonaparte and his consort, in which he naturally and truly disavowed the communication of Fouché, and attempted by every means in his power to dispel her apprehensions. But he refused to dismiss Fouché, when she demanded it as the punishment due to that minister's audacity, in tampering with her feelings; and this refusal alone might have convinced Joséphine, that though ancient habitual affection might for a time maintain its influence in the nuptial chamber, it must at length give way before the suggestions of political interest, which were sure to predominate in the cabinet. In fact, when the idea had once been started, the chief objection was removed, and Buonaparte, being spared

the pain of directly communicating the unkind and ungrateful proposal to Joséphine, had now only to afford her time to familiarize herself with the idea of a divorce, as that which political combinations rendered inevitable.

The communication of Fouché was made before Napoleon undertook his operations in Spain; and by the time of the meeting at Erfurt, the divorce seems to have been a matter determined, since the subject of a match betwixt Buonaparte and one of the Archduchesses, the possibility of which had been anticipated as far back as the treaty of Tilsit, was resumed, seriously treated of, and if not received with cordiality by the Imperial family of Russia, was equally far from being finally rejected. The reigning Empress and the Empress Mother, were, however, opposed to it. The ostensible motive was, as we have elsewhere said, the difference of religion; but these high-minded princesses rejected the alliance chiefly on account of the personal character of the suitor. And although it must have been managed with the greatest secrecy imaginable, it seems probable that the idea of substituting an Archduchess of Austria for her whose hand was refused him, was started in the course of the treaty of Schoenbrun, and had its effects in providing lenient terms for the weaker party. Napoleon himself says, that he renounced his purpose of dismembering Austria

when his marriage was fixed upon. But the conditions of peace were signed on the 14th of October, and therefore the motive which influenced Napoleon in granting them must have had existence previous to that period.

Yet the contrary is boldly asserted. The idea of the match is said to have been suggested by the Austrian government at a later period, upon understanding that difficulties had occurred in Napoleon's negotiation for a matrimonial alliance in the family of Alexander. Fouché ascribes the whole to the address of his own agent, the Comte de Narbonne, a Frenchman of the old school, witty, pliant, gay, well-mannered and insinuating, who was ambassador at Vienna in the month of January, 1810.

But whether the successor of Joséphine were or were not already determined upon, the measures for separating this amiable and interesting woman from him whose fortunes she had assisted to raise, and to whose person she was so much attached, were in full and public operation soon after her husband's return from the campaign of Wagram. Upon the 3d of December, Buonaparte attended the solemn service of Te Deum for his victories. He was clad with unusual magnificence, wearing the Spanish costume, and displaying in his hat an enormous plume of feathers. The Kings of Saxony and Wirtemberg, who attend-

ed as his satellites on this occasion, were placed beside him in full uniform, and remained uncovered during the ceremony.

From the Cathedral, Napoleon passed to the opening of the Legislative Body, and boasted, in the oration he addressed to them, of the victories which he had achieved, and the trophies which he had acquired; nay, he vaunted of his having re-united Tuscany to the Empire,—as if the spoiling the inoffensive and unresisting widow and orphan could ever be a legitimate subject of triumph. From the existing affairs of Spain, no direct reason for gratulation could be derived; but when Napoleon could no longer claim praise from things as they presently stood, he was profuse in his promises of a rapid change to the better, and spoke as a prophet when he ceased to be the reporter of agreeable facts.

« When I,» he said, « show myself on the other side of the Pyrenees, the terrified Leopard shall plunge into the ocean, to avoid shame, defeat, and destruction. The triumph of my arms shall be that of the Genius of Good over the Genius of Evil, of moderation, order, and morals, over civil war, anarchy, and the malevolent passions.» With such fair colouring will ambition and injustice attempt to screen their purposes. A poetical reply from Monsieur de Fontanes assured the Emperor,

that whatever was connected with him must rise to grandeur, whatever was subjected to any other influence was threatened with a speedy fall. « It was therefore necessary,» he continued, « to submit to your ascendancy, whose councils are at once recommended by heroism and by policy.» To this speech Buonaparte made a rejoinder, in which, resuming the well-worn themes of his own praises, he alluded to the obstacles which he had surmounted, and concluded, « I and my family will always know how to sacrifice our most tender affections to the interests and welfare of the Great Nation.» These concluding words, the meaning of which was already guessed by all who belonged to the court, were soon no riddle to the public in general.

Two days afterwards, Napoleon made Joséphine acquainted with the cruel certainty, that the separation was ultimately determined upon. But not the many months which had passed since the subject was first touched upon by Fouché—not the conviction which she must have long since received from various quarters, that the measure was unalterably resolved upon, could strengthen her to hear the tongue of her beloved husband announce what was in fact, though not in name, a sentence of repudiation. She fell into a long and profound swoon. Napoleon was

much affected, but his resolution was taken, and could not be altered. The preparations for the separation went on without delay.

On the 15th December, just ten days after the official communication of her fate had been given to the Empress, Napoleon and Joséphine appeared in presence of the Arch-chancellor, the family of Napoleon, the principal officers of state,—in a word, the full Imperial Council. In this assembly, Napoleon stated the deep national interest which required that he should have successors of his own body, the heirs of his love for his people, to occupy the throne on which Providence had placed him. He informed them, that he had for several years renounced the hope of having children by his well-beloved Empress Joséphine; and that therefore he had resolved to subject the feelings of his heart to the good of the state, and desire the dissolution of their marriage. He was, he said, but forty years old, and might well hope to live to train up such children as Providence might send him, in his own sentiments and arts of government. Again he dwelt on the truth and tenderness of his beloved spouse, his partner during fifteen years of happy union. Crowned as she had been by his own hand, he desired she should retain the rank of Empress during her life.

Joséphine arose, and with a faltering voice,

and eyes suffused with tears, expressed in few words sentiments similar to those of her husband. The Imperial pair then demanded from the Arch-chancellor a written instrument in evidence of their mutual desire of separation; and it was granted accordingly, in all due form, with the authority of the Council.

The Senate were next assembled; and on the 16th December, pronounced a consultum, or decree, authorizing the separation of the Emperor and Empress, and assuring to Joséphine a dowry of two millions of francs, and the rank of Empress during her life. Addresses were voted to both the Imperial parties, in which all possible changes were rung on the duty of subjecting our dearest affections to the public good; and the conduct of Buonaparte, in exchanging his old consort for a young one, was proclaimed a sacrifice, for which the eternal love of the French people could alone console his heart.

The union of Napoleon and Joséphine being thus abrogated by the supreme civil power, it only remained to procure the intervention of the spiritual authorities. The Arch-chancellor, duly authorized by the Imperial pair, presented a request for this purpose to the Diocesan of the Officiality, or ecclesiastical court of Paris, who did not hesitate to declare the marriage dissolved, assigning, however, no reason

for such their doom. They announced it, indeed, as conforming to the decrees of councils, and the usages of the Gallican church—a proposition which would have cost the learned and reverend officials much trouble, if they had been required to make it good either by argument or authority.

When this sentence had finally dissolved their union, the Emperor retired to St Cloud, where he lived in seclusion for some days. Joséphine, on her part, took up her residence in the beautiful villa of Malmaison, near St Germain. Here she principally dwelt for the remaining years of her life, which were just prolonged to see the first fall of her husband; an event which might have been averted had he been content to listen more frequently to her lessons of moderation. Her life was chiefly spent in cultivating the fine arts, of which she collected some beautiful specimens, and in pursuing the science of botany; but especially in the almost daily practice of acts of benevolence and charity, of which the English *détenus*, of whom there were several at St Germain, frequently shared the benefit. Napoleon visited her very frequently, and always treated her with the respect to which she was entitled. He added also to her dowry a third million of francs, that she might feel no inconvenience from the habits of expense to which it was her foible to be addicted.

This important state measure was no sooner completed, than the Great Council was summoned, on the 1st February, to assist the Emperor in the selection of a new spouse. They were given to understand, that a match with a Grand Duchess of Russia had been proposed, but was likely to be embarrassed by disputes concerning religion. A daughter of the King of Saxony was also mentioned, but it was easily indicated to the Council that their choice ought to fall upon a princess of the house of Austria. At the conclusion of the meeting, Eugène, the son of the repudiated Joséphine, was commissioned by the Council to propose to the Austrian ambassador a match between Napoleon and the Archduchess Maria Louisa. Prince Schwarzenberg had his instructions on the subject; so that the match was proposed, discussed, and decided in the Council, and afterwards adjusted between plenipotentiaries on either side, in the space of twenty-four hours. The espousals of Napoleon and Maria Louisa were celebrated at Vienna, 11th March, 1810. The person of Buonaparte was represented by his favourite Berthier, while the Archduke Charles assisted at the ceremony in the name of the Emperor Francis. A few days afterwards, the youthful bride, accompanied by the Queen of Naples, proceeded towards France.

With good taste, Napoleon dispensed with

the ceremonies used in the reception of Marie Antoinette, whose marriage with Louis XVI., though never named or alluded to, was in other respects the model of the present solemnity. Near Soissons, a single horseman, no way distinguished by dress, rode past the carriage in which the young Empress was seated, and had the boldness to return, as if to reconnoitre more closely. The carriage stopped, the door was opened, and Napoleon, breaking through all the tediousness of ceremony, introduced himself to his bride, and came with her to Soissons. The marriage ceremony was performed at Paris by Buonaparte's uncle, the Cardinal Fesch. The most splendid rejoicings, illuminations, concerts, festivals, took place upon this important occasion. But a great calamity occurred, which threw a shade over these demonstrations of joy. Prince Schwarzenberg had given a distinguished ball on the occasion, when unhappily the dancing-room, which was temporary, and erected in the garden, caught fire. No efforts could stop the progress of the flames, in which several persons perished, and particularly the sister of Prince Schwarzenberg himself. This tragic circumstance struck a damp on the public mind, and was considered as a bad omen, especially when it was remembered that the marriage of Louis XVI. with a former princess of Austria had been signalized by a similar disaster.

As a domestic occurrence, nothing could more contribute to Buonaparte's happiness than his union with Maria Louisa. He was wont to compare her with Joséphine, by giving the latter all the advantages of art and grace; the former the charms of simple modesty and innocence. His former Empress used every art to support or enhance her personal charms; but with so much prudence and mystery, that the secret cares of her toilet could never be traced—her successor trusted, for the power of pleasing, to youth and nature. Joséphine mismanaged her revenue, and incurred debt without scruple. Maria Louisa lived within her income, or if she desired any indulgence beyond it, which was rarely the case, she asked it as a favour of Napoleon. Joséphine, accustomed to political intrigue, loved to manage, to influence, and to guide her husband; Maria Louisa desired only to please and to obey him. Both were excellent women, of great sweetness of temper, and fondly attached to Napoleon. In the difference between these distinguished persons, we can easily discriminate the leading features of the Parisian, and of the simple German beauty; but it is certainly singular that the artificial character should have belonged to the daughter of the West Indian planter; that marked by nature and simplicity, to a princess of the proudest court in Europe.

Buonaparte, whose domestic conduct was generally praiseworthy, behaved with the utmost kindness to his princely bride. He observed, however, the strictest etiquette, and required it from the Empress. If it happened, for example, as was often the case, that he was prevented from attending at the hour when dinner was placed on the table, he was displeased if, in the interim of his absence, which was often prolonged, she either took a book, or had recourse to any female occupation,—if, in short, he did not find her in the attitude of waiting for the signal to take her place at table. Perhaps a sense of his inferior birth made Napoleon more tenacious of this species of form, as what he could not afford to relinquish. On the other hand, Maria Louisa is said to have expressed her surprise at her husband's dispensing with the use of arms and attendance of guards, and at his moving about with the freedom of an individual; although this could be no great novelty to a member of the Imperial Family of Austria, most of whom, and especially the Emperor Francis, are in the habit of mixing familiarly with the people of Vienna, at public places, and in the public walks.

As it influenced his political fate, Buonaparte has registered his complaint, that the Austrian match was a precipice covered with flowers.

which he was rashly induced to approach by the hopes of domestic happiness. But if this proved so, it was the fault of Napoleon himself; his subjects and his allies augured very differently of its consequences, and to himself alone it was owing that these auguries were disappointed. It was to have been expected, that a connexion formed with the most ancient Imperial family in Christendom, might have induced Buonaparte to adopt some of those sentiments of moderation which regard rather the stability than the increase of power. It constituted a point at which he might pause. It might have been thought that, satiated with success, and wearied with enterprise, he would have busied himself more in consolidating the power which he desired to transmit to his expected posterity, than in aiming at rendering his grandeur more invidious and more precarious, by further schemes of ambition. Even the charms which this union added to his domestic life, might, it was hoped, bring on a taste for repose, which, could it have influenced that fiery imagination and frame of iron, might have been of such essential advantage to Europe.

Napoleon knew what was expected, and endeavoured to vindicate himself beforehand for the disappointment which he foresaw was about to ensue.

« The good citizens rejoice sincerely at my

marriage, Monsieur?» he said to Decrès, his minister.

« Very much, Sire.»

« I understand they think the Lion will go to slumber, ha?»

« To speak the truth, Sire, they entertain some hopes of that nature.»

Napoleon paused an instant, and then replied, « They are mistaken; yet it is not the fault of the Lion; slumber would be as agreeable to him as to others. But see you not that while I have the air of being constantly the attacking party, I am, in fact, acting only on the defensive?»

This sophism, by which Napoleon endeavoured to persuade all men, that his constant wars arose, not from choice, but out of the necessity of his situation, will be best discussed hereafter.

In the mean time, we may only notice, that the Emperor Alexander judged most accurately of the consequences of the Austrian match, when he said, on receiving the news, « Then the next task will be, to drive me back to my forests;» so certain he was that Napoleon would make his intimate alliance with the Emperor Francis, the means of an attack upon Russia; and so acute was he in seeing the germs of future and more desperate wars, in a union from which more short-sighted politicians were looking for the blessings of peace.

CHAPTER II.

Almost all the foreign French Settlements fall into the hands of the British.—French Squadron destroyed at the Isle of Aix, by Lord Cochrane—and at the Isle of Rosas, by Lord Collingwood.—Return to the Proceedings in Spain.—Soult takes Oporto—Attacked and Defeated by Sir Arthur Wellesley, and compelled to a disastrous Retreat.—Ferrol and Corunna retaken by the Patriots.—Battle of Talavera, gained by Sir Arthur Wellesley—who, nevertheless, in consequence of the obstinacy and bigotry of Cuesta, is compelled to retreat upon Portugal—Created Lord Wellington.—The French Armies take many Towns and strong Places.—Supreme Junta retreat to Cadiz.—Unsubdued spirit of the Spanish people.—The Guerilla system.—Mutual cruelties of the Guerillas and the French Troops.—Growing disappointment of Buonaparte.—His immense exertions —A large Army raised, under the name of the Army of Portugal, commanded by Masséna.—Lord Wellington compelled to remain inactive, from his inferiority of force.—Battle of Busaco, in which the French are Defeated with great loss.—Lord Wellington's famous Retreat on Torres Vedras.

NOTWITHSTANDING the credit which Napoleon had acquired, by dictating to the house of Austria the triumphant treaty of Schoenbrun,

and also by allying himself with that ancient Imperial House, which had, on different occasions, showed towards him the signs of persevering enmity, this period of his history did not pass without his experiencing several reverses of fortune. The few foreign settlements, which hitherto remained united to France, were now successively taken by the British. Cayenne, Martinico, Senegal, and Saint Domingo, were conquered and occupied in the West Indies; while Lord Collingwood, with troops furnished from Sicily, occupied the islands of Cephalonia, Zante, Ithaca, and Cerigo.

A French squadron of men of war being blockaded in the roadstead of the Isle of Aix, the determined valour of Lord Cochrane was employed for their destruction. Fire-ships were sent against the French vessels, and though the execution was less complete than had been expected, owing to some misunderstanding between Lord Cochrane and Admiral Gambier, who commanded in chief, yet the greater part of the French ships were burnt, or driven ashore and destroyed. Lord Collingwood also destroyed an important French convoy, with the armed vessels who protected it, in the Isle of Rosas. Every thing announced that England retained the full command of what has been termed her native element; while the transactions in Spain showed, that,

under a general who understood at once how to gain victories, and profit by them when obtained, the land forces of Britain were no less formidable than her navy. This subject draws our attention to the affairs of the Peninsula, where it might be truly said « the land was burning. »

The evacuation of Corunna by the army of the late Sir John Moore, and their return to England, which their disastrous condition rendered indispensable, left Soult in seeming possession of Galicia, Ferrol and Corunna having both surrendered to him. But the strength of the Spanish cause did not lie in walls and ramparts, but in the indomitable courage of the gallant patriots. The Galicians continued to distinguish themselves by a war of posts, in which the invaders could claim small advantages; and when Soult determined to enter Portugal, he was obliged to leave Ney, with considerable forces, to secure his communication with Spain.

Soult's expedition began prosperously, though it was doomed to terminate very differently. He defeated General La Romana, and compelled him to retreat to Sanabria. The frontier town of Chaves was taken by Soult, after some resistance, and he forced his way towards Oporto. But no sooner had the main body of Soult's army left Chaves, than, in spite of the efforts of the garrison, the place

was relieved by an insurrectionary army of Portuguese, under General Silveyra. The invader, neglecting these operations in his rear, continued to advance upon Oporto, carried that fine city by storm, after a desultory defence of three days, and suffered his troops to commit the greatest cruelties, both on the soldiers and unarmed citizens.

But when Marshal Soult had succeeded thus far, his situation became embarrassing. The Galicians, recovering their full energy, had retaken Vigo and other places; and Silveyra, advancing from Chaves to the bridge of Amarante, interposed betwixt the French general and Galicia, and placed himself in communication with the Spaniards.

While Soult was thus cooped up in Oporto, the English ministry, undaunted by the failure of their late expedition, resolved to continue the defence of the Portuguese, and to enter into still closer alliance with the Supreme Junta of Spain. Consulting their own opinion and the public voice, all consideration of rank and long service was laid aside, in order to confer the command of the troops which were to be sent to the Continent, on Sir Arthur Wellesley, whose conduct in the battle of Vimeira, and the subsequent explanations which he afforded at the Court of Inquiry, had taught all Britain to believe, that if Portugal could be defended at all, it must be by the victor of that

day. He was scarce landed at Lisbon, ere he fully justified the good opinion of his countrymen. He crossed the Douro at different points, with a celerity for which the French were unprepared, and, after a brilliant action under the walls of Oporto, compelled Soult to evacuate that city, and commence a retreat, so disastrous as to resemble that of Sir John Moore. In this retrograde movement, the French left behind them cannon, equipments, baggage—all that can strengthen an army, and enable it to act as such; and, after all these sacrifices, their leader could hardly make his escape into Galicia, with scarce three-fourths of his army remaining, where he found great difficulty in remodelling his forces. Ney, whom he had left as governor of that province, was hard pressed by the patriots, who defeated the French in several battles, and eventually retook the towns of Ferrol and Corunna.

Sir Arthur Wellesley was prevented from completing Soult's defeat by pursuing him into Galicia, because, after the Spaniards had sustained the severe defeat of Tudela, the French had penetrated into Andalusia in great strength, where they were only opposed by an ill-equipped and dispirited army of 40,000 men, under the rash and ill-starred General Cuesta. It was evident, that Marshal Victor, who commanded in Andalusia, had it in his

power to have detached a considerable part of his force on Lisbon, supposing that city had been uncovered, by Sir Arthur Wellesley's carrying his forces in pursuit of Soult. This was to be prevented, if possible. The English general formed the magnificent plan, for which Napoleon's departure to the Austrian campaign afforded a favourable opportunity, of marching into Andalusia, uniting the British forces with those of Cuesta, and acting against the invaders with such vigour, as might at once check their progress in the South, and endanger their occupation of Madrid. Unhappily, an ill-timed jealousy seems to have taken possession of Cuesta, which manifested itself in every possible shape, in which frowardness, and a petty obstinacy of spirit, could be exhibited. To no one of the combined plans, submitted to him by the English general, would he give assent or effectual concurrence; and when a favourable opportunity arrived of attacking Victor, before he was united with the forces which Joseph Buonaparte and Sébastiani were bringing from Madrid to his support, Cuesta alleged he would not give battle on a Sunday.

The golden opportunity was thus lost; and when the allies were obliged to receive battle instead of giving it, on the 28th July, 1809, it was without the advantages which the former occasion held out. Yet the famous battle of

Talavera de la Reyna, in which the French were completely defeated, was, under these unfavourable circumstances, achieved by Sir Arthur Wellesley. The event of this action, in which the British forces had been able to defend themselves against double their own number, became, owing to the continued wilfulness of Cuesta, very different from what such a victory ought to have produced. The French troops, assembling from every point, left Sir Arthur no other mode of assuring the safety of his army, than by a retreat on Portugal; and for want of means of transport, which the Spanish general ought to have furnished, more than fifteen hundred of the wounded were left to the mercy of the French. They were treated as became a courteous enemy, yet the incident afforded a fine pretext to contest the victory, which the French had resigned by flying from the field.

The assertions of the bulletins in the *Moniteur* could not deceive men on the true state of affairs. The Spanish Junta were sensible of the services rendered by the English general, and, somewhat of the latest, removed Cuesta from the command, to manifest their disapprobation of his unaccountable conduct. At home, Sir Arthur Wellesley was promoted to the peerage, by the title of Lord Wellington, who was destined to ascend, with the universal applause of the nation, as high as our consti-

tution will permit. But Buonaparte paid the greatest compliment to the victor of Talavera, by the splenetic resentment with which he was filled by the news. He had received the tidings by his private intelligence, before the officer arrived with the regular dispatches. He was extremely ill received by the Emperor; and, as if the messengers had been responsible for the tidings they brought, a second officer, with a duplicate of the same intelligence, was treated still more harshly, and for a time put under arrest. This explosion of passion could not be occasioned by the consequences of the action, for the experienced eye of Napoleon must have discriminated the circumstances by which the effects of victory were in a great measure lost to the allied armies; but he saw in the battle of Talavera, an assurance given to both English and Spanish soldiers, that, duly resisted, the French would fly from them. He foresaw, also, that the British government would be tempted to maintain the contest on the Continent, and that the Spaniards would be encouraged to persevere in resistance. He foresaw, in short, that war of six desperate and bloody campaigns, which did not terminate till the battle of Toulouse, in 1814.

But it needed no anticipation to fill Napoleon's mind with anxiety on the subject of Spain. It is true, fortune seemed everywhere to smile on his arms. Zaragossa, once more

besieged, maintained its former name, but without the former brilliant result. After a defence as distinguished as in the first siege, the brave garrison and citizens, deprived of means of defence, and desperate of all hope of relief, were compelled to surrender.

Gerona, Tarragona, Tortosa, were all taken after a vigorous defence; and it seemed as if Catalonia, the most warlike of the Spanish departments, was effectually subdued.

Andalusia, the richest province which sustained the patriot cause, certainly was conquered, in consequence of a total defeat sustained by the Spanish grand army, under Areizaga, at Ocana, November 1809, after the English troops had retreated to the Portuguese frontier. Joseph Buonaparte, whose road was cleared by this last success, entered Cordova in triumph upon the 17th of January, 1810, and proud Seville itself upon the 17th of February following. Yet the chief prize of victory had not yet been gained. The Supreme Junta had effected their retreat to Cadiz, which city, situated in an island, and cut off from the main-land, on one side by a canal, and on the other three by the ocean, was capable of the most strenuous defence.

Cadiz contained a garrison of twenty thousand men, English, Spanish, and Portuguese, under the command of General Graham, a distinguished officer, whose merits, like those of Buonaparte, had been first distinguished at

the siege of Toulon.[1] Marshal Soult, as first in command in Spain, disposed himself to form the siege of this city, the capture of which would have been almost the death-knell to the cause of the patriots.

But although these important successes read well in the *Moniteur*, yet such was the indomitable character of the Spaniards, which Napoleon had contrived fully to awaken, that misfortunes, which would have crushed all hope in any other people, seemed to them only an incentive to further and more desperate resistance. When they talked of the state of their country, they expressed no dismay at their present adverse circumstances. It had cost their ancestors, they said, two centuries to rid themselves of the Moors; they had no doubt that in a shorter time they should free themselves of the yoke of France; but they must reckon on time and opportunity, as well as valour. The events of the war in many respects gave credit to their hopes. The Spaniards, often found weak where they thought themselves strongest, proved sometimes most powerful, where, to all human appearance, they seemed weakest. While they lost Andalusia, believed to be so defensible, the mountainous province of Galicia, through which the French had so lately marched triumphantly in pursuit of the British, taking in their progress

[1] Vol. III. pp. 42-43.

the important maritime towns of Corunna and Ferrol, was wrenched from the conquerors by the exertions of La Romana, assisted by the warlike natives of the country, and at the head of an undisciplined and ill-equipped army.

In Catalonia, too, the French had hardly time to accomplish the conquest of towns and fortresses to which we have alluded, when they found themselves checked, baffled, and sometimes defeated, by the Catalans, under Lacy, O'Donnell, and d'Eroles, who maintained the patriotic cause at the head of those energetic marksmen, the Somatens, or Miquelets. Nay, while the French were extending their seeming conquests to the Mediterranean Sea, and thundering at the gates of Cadiz, so little were they in peaceful possession of Navarre, and the other provinces adjoining to France, that not an officer with dispatches could pass from Burgos to Bayonne without a powerful escort, and bands of Spaniards even showed themselves on the French frontier, and passed it for the purpose of skirmishing and raising contributions. Such being the case on the frontiers nearest to France, it may be well supposed, that the midland provinces were not more subordinate. In fact, through the whole Peninsula the French held no influence whatsoever that was not inspired by the force of the bayonet and sabre; and where these

could not operate, the country was in universal insurrection.

The basis of this extensive and persevering resistance was laid in the general system of Guerilla, or partisan warfare, to which the genius of the Spanish people, and the character of their country, are peculiarly fitted, and which offered a resistance to the invaders more formidable by far than that of regular armies, because less tangible, and less susceptible of being crushed in general actions. It was with the defenders of Spain, as with the guardian of the enchanted castle in the Italian romance. An armed warrior first encountered the champion who attempted the adventure, and when he had fallen under the sword of the assailant, the post which he had occupied appeared manned by a body of pigmies, small in size, but so numerous and so enterprising, as to annoy the knight-errant far more than the gigantic force of his first adversary. The qualities of a partisan, or irregular soldier, are inherent in the national character of the Spaniard. Calm, temperate, capable of much fatigue, and veiling under a cold demeanour an ardent and fiery character, they are qualified to wait for opportunities of advantage, and are not easily discouraged by difficulty or defeat. Good marksmen in general, and handling the lance, sword, and dagger with address, they are formidable in an ambush, and not less

so in a close mêlée, where men fight hand to hand, more as nature dictates than according to the rules of war. The obstinacy of the Castilian character, also, had its advantages in this peculiar state of warfare. Neither promises nor threats made any impression on them, and the severities executed in fulfilment of menaces only inflamed the spirit of hostility by that of private revenge, to which the Spaniard is far more accessible than either to the voice of caution or persuasion.

Neither were the officers less qualified for the task than the men. The command of a guerilla was of a character not to be desired by any who did not find himself equal to, and in some measure called upon to accept, the dangerous pre-eminence. There were few Spanish officers possessed of the scientific knowledge of war, and of course few adequate to lead armies into the field; but the properties necessary for a guerilla leader are imprinted in the human mind, and ready for exercise whenever they are required. These leaders were, as it chanced, some of them men of high birth and military education; some had been smugglers or peasants, or had practised other professions, as was discovered from their noms-de-guerre, as the Curate, the Doctor, the Shepherd, and so forth. Many of their names will be long associated with the recollection of their gallant actions; and those

of others, as of Mina and the Empecinado, will, at the same time, remind us, of the gross ingratitude with which their heroic efforts have been rewarded.

These daring men possessed the most perfect knowledge of the passes, strengths, woods, mountains, and wildernesses, of the provinces in which they warred; and the exact intelligence which they obtained from the peasantry made them intimately acquainted with the motions of the enemy. Was too weak a French detachment moved, it ran the risk of being cut off: was the garrison feeble at the place which if left, the fort was taken. The slightest as well as the most important objects met the attention of the guerillas; a courier could not move without a large escort, nor could the intrusive king take the amusement of hunting, however near to his capital, unless, like Earl Percy in the ballad, attended by a guard of fifteen hundred men. The Juramentados, those Spaniards, that is, who had sworn allegiance to King Joseph, were of course closely watched by the guerillas, and if they rendered themselves inconveniently or obnoxiously active in the cause they had espoused, were often kidnapped and punished as traitors; examples which rendered submission to, or active co-operation with the French, at least as imprudent as boldly opposing the invaders.

The numbers of the guerillas varied at dif-

ferent times, as the chiefs rose or declined in reputation, and as they possessed the means of maintaining their followers. Some led small flying armies of two thousand and upwards. Others, or the same chiefs under a reverse of fortune, had only ten or twenty followers. The French often attempted to surprise and destroy the parties by which they suffered most, and for that purpose detached moveable columns from different points, to assemble on the rendezvous of the guerilla. But, notwithstanding all their activity and dexterity on such expeditions, they rarely succeeded in catching their enemy at unawares; or, if it so happened, the individuals composing the band broke up, and dispersed by ways only known to themselves; and when the French officers accounted them totally annihilated, they were again assembled on another point exercising a partisan war on the rear, and upon the communications of those who lately expected to have them at their mercy. Thus invisible when they were sought for, the guerillas seemed everywhere present when damage could be done to the invaders. To chase them was to pursue the wind, and to circumvent them was to detain water with a sieve.

Soult had recourse to severity to intimidate these desultory but most annoying enemies, by publishing a proclamation, threatening to

treat the members of the guerillas, not as regular soldiers, but as banditti taken in the fact, and thus execute such of them as chanced to be made prisoners. The chiefs, in reply to this proclamation, published a royal decree, as they termed it, declaring that each Spaniard was, by the necessity of the times, a soldier, and that he was entitled to all military privileges when taken witharms in his hands. They therefore announced, that, having ample means of retaliation in their power, they would not scruple to make use of them, by executing two Frenchmen for every one of their followers who should suffer in consequence of Soult's unjust and inhuman proclamation. These threats were fulfilled on both sides. It is said, a horrid example of cruelty was given by a French general, who in a manner crucified, by nailing to trees, eight prisoners, whom he had taken from the guerillas of the Empecinado. The daring Spaniard's passions were wound up too high to listen either to pity or fear; he retaliated the cruelty by nailing the same number of Frenchmen to the same trees, and leaving them to fill the forest of Guadarama with their groans. But these excesses became rare on either side, for the mutual interest of both parties soon led them to recur to the ordinary rules of war.

We have given a slight sketch of the peculiar character of this singular warfare, which con-

stitutes a curious and interesting chapter in the history of mankind, and serves to show how difficult it is to subject, by the most formidable military means, a people who are determined not to submit to the yoke. The probability of the case had not escaped the acute eye of Buonaparte himself, who, though prescient of the consequences, had not been able to resist the temptation of seizing upon this splendid sovereignty, and who was still determined, as he is said to have expressed himself, to reign at least over Spain, if he could not reign over the Spanish people. But even this stern wish, adopted in vengeance rather than in soberness of mind, could not, if gratified, have removed the perplexity which was annexed to the affairs of the Peninsula.

Buonaparte, in the spirit of calculation which was one of his great attributes, had reckoned that Spain, when in his hands, would retain the same channels of wealth which she had possessed from her South American provinces. Had he been able to carry into execution his whole plan—had the old king really embarked for Peru or Mexico, it might have happened that Napoleon's influence over Charles, his queen, and her favourite Godoy, could have been used to realize these expectations. But in consequence of the rupture which had taken place, the Spanish colonies, at first taking part with the patriots of the mother coun-

try, made large remittances to Cadiz for the support of the war against the French; and when afterwards, adopting another view of the subject, the opportunity appeared to them favourable for effecting their own independence, the golden tide which annually carried tribute to Old Spain was entirely dried up.

This Buonaparte had not reckoned upon, and he had now to regret an improvident avidity, similar to that of Æsop's boy, who killed the bird which laid eggs of gold. The disappointment was as great as unexpected. Napoleon had, from his private treasure, and the means he possessed in France, discharged the whole expense of the two large armies, by whom the territory of Spain was first occupied; and it was natural for him to suppose, that in this, as in so many other cases, the French troops should, after this first expedition, be paid and maintained at the expense of the provinces in which they were quartered. This was the rather to be expected, when Andalusia, Grenada, Valencia, fertile and rich provinces, were added to the districts overrun by the invading army. But so general was the disinclination to the French, so universal the disappearance of specie, so unintermitting the disturbances excited by the guerillas, that both King Joseph, his court, and the French army, were obliged to have constant recourse to Napoleon for the means of supporting them-

selves; and such large remittances were made for these purposes, that in all the countries occupied by the French, the Spanish coin gradually disappeared from the circulation, and was replaced by that of France. The being obliged, therefore, to send supplies to the kingdom from which he had expected to receive them, was a subject of great mortification to Napoleon, which was not, however, the only one connected with the government he had established there.

In accepting the crown of Spain at the hands of Napoleon, Joseph, who was a man of sense and penetration, must have been sufficiently aware that it was an emblem of borrowed and dependent sovereignty, gleaming but with such reflected light as his brother's Imperial diadem might shed upon it. He could not but know, that in making him King of Spain, Napoleon retained over him all his rights as a subject of France, to whose Emperor, in his regal as well as personal capacity, he still, though a nominal monarch, was accounted to owe all vassalage. For this he must have been fully prepared. But Joseph, who had a share of the family pride, expected to possess with all others, save Buonaparte, the external appearance at least of sovereignty, and was much dissatisfied with the proceedings of the marshals and generals sent by his brother to his assistance. Each of these, accustomed to command his own sepa-

rate corps d'armée, with no subordination save that to the Emperor only, proceeded to act on his own authority, and his own responsibility, levied contributions at pleasure, and regarded the authority of King Joseph as that of a useless and ineffective civilian, who followed the march along with the impediments and baggage of the camp, and to whom little honour was reckoned due, and no obedience. In a word, so complicated became the state of the war and of the government, so embarrassing the rival pretensions set up by the several French generals, against Joseph and against each other, that when Joseph came to Paris to assist at the marriage of Napoleon and Maria Louisa, he made an express demand that all the French troops in Spain should be placed under his own command, or rather that of his major-general; and in case this was declined, he proposed to abdicate the crown, or, what was equivalent, that the French auxiliaries should be withdrawn from Spain. Buonaparte had on a former occasion named his brother generalissimo of the troops within his pretended dominions; he now agreed that the French generals serving in Spain should be subjected, without exception, to the control of Marshal Jourdan, as major-general of King Joseph. But as these commanders were removed from Buonaparte's immediate eye, and were obliged to render an account of their proceedings

both to the intrusive king and to Napoleon, it was not difficult for them to contrive to play off the one against the other, and in fact to conduct themselves as if independent of both.

These very embarrassing circumstances were increased by the presence of the English army, which, having twice driven the French from Portugal, showed no intention of returning to their ships, but lay on the frontiers of the latter kingdom, ready to encourage and assist the continued resistance of Spain. It was not the fault of the commander-in-chief that their duties were for the present in a great measure limited to those of an army of observation. If the troops which assisted in the ill-advised Walcheren expedition had been united to those under the command of Lord Wellington, they would, at a loss infinitely less, and yet greatly more honourably incurred, have driven the French beyond the Ebro, or more probably, have compelled them to evacuate Spain. But our cabinet, though adopting new and more bold, as well as more just ideas of the force of the country, could not be expected perhaps all at once, and amid the clamour of an Opposition who saw nothing but reckless desperation in whatever measures were calculated to resist France, to hazard so much of the national force upon one single adventure, although bearing in their own eyes a promising aspect. Statesmen, and even

those of no mean character, are apt to forget, that where a large supply of men and money is necessary to insure the object aimed at, it is miserable policy to attempt to economize either; and that such ill-timed thrift must render the difficulties attending the expedition either altogether insurmountable, or greatly add to the loss which must be encountered to overcome them.

In the mean time, Buonaparte, with respect to the Peninsula, convulsed as it was by civil war in every province,—half-subdued and half-emancipated,—causing him an immense expense, as well as endless contradiction and mortification,—stood much in the condition, to use a popular simile, of one, who, having hold of a wolf, feels it equally difficult to overpower the furious animal, and dangerous to let him go. His power over the general mind, however, rested a great deal on the opinion commonly received, that he was destined to succeed in whatever enterprise he undertook. He himself entertained some such ideas concerning the force of his own destiny; and, as it was no part either of his temper or his policy to abandon what he had once undertaken, he determined to make a gigantic effort to drive the Leopards and their Sepoy general, as the French papers called the British and Lord Wellington, out of Portugal; to possess himself of Lisbon; and to shut that avenue against

foreign forces again attempting to enter the Peninsula.

In obedience to the Emperor's commands, an army, to be termed that of Portugal, was assembled, on a scale which the Peninsula had scarcely yet seen. It was called by the French themselves one hundred and ten thousand men, but certainly rather exceeded than fell short of the number of eighty thousand. This large force was put under the command of Masséna, prince of Essling, the greatest name in the French army, after that of Napoleon, and so favoured by fortune, that his master was wont to call him the Spoilt Child of Victory.

Lord Wellington's British troops did not exceed twenty-five thousand in number, and there were among them so many invalids, that his motions were necessarily entirely limited to the defensive. He had, however, a subsidiary force under his command, consisting of thirty thousand Portuguese, in whom other generals might have rested little confidence; but they were receiving British pay and British allowances, were disciplined in the British manner, and commanded by British officers; and Lord Wellington, who had seen the unwarlike Hindu behave himself in similar circumstances like a companion not unworthy of the English soldier, had little doubt of being able to awaken the dormant and suppressed, but natural ardour of the natives of Portugal. This force

had been in a great measure trained under the auspices of Marshal Beresford, an officer who has eternal claims on the gratitude of his country, for the generous manner in which he devoted himself to a labour, which had at first little that was flattering or promising; and for the very great perfection to which, by dint of skill, good temper, and knowledge of human nature, he was able to bring his task to completion at such an important crisis.

It was, however, of the utmost importance to avoid trusting too much to the Portuguese troops, which were so recently levied and trained, until they had acquired something of the practice, as well as the theory, of the military profession.

Thus, between the weak state of the British, and the imperfect discipline of the Portuguese, Lord Wellington was reduced to temporary inactivity, and had the mortification to see the frontier places of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida taken almost in the presence of his army. The fears of the British nation were as usual excited in an unreasonable degree by these two sinister events; but they had both come within the calculations of Lord Wellington, whose advance to the frontier was without the intention of incurring any risk for the preservation of those places, but merely, by inducing the garrisons to hold out, to protract as long as possible a defence, the duration of which must

be equally advantageous to the allies, and wasteful to the French.

The position on which he meant to maintain the defence of Portugal had been long since fixed upon, and the fortifications had been as long in progress. It was that of Torres Vedras, where, as appears from his own evidence before the Cintra Court of Inquiry, he had expected Junot to make a defence, after the battle of Vimeira. All Lord Wellington's previous movements were adjusted carefully, for the purpose of drawing the enemy from his supplies and communications to that point, beyond which he proposed the invader should pass no farther.

Admirably as Lord Wellington's premises were connected with the conclusion he aimed at, chance, or rather the presumption of the French general, favoured him with an unexpected opportunity of adding glory to a retreat, which was dictated by prudence. Masséna, if he did justice to British courage, thought himself entitled to set the military skill of their general at utter defiance. He saw, indeed, their retrograde movements, from the banks of the Coa towards Lisbon, conducted with all the deliberate and guarded caution of a game at chess; but still these movements were retrograde, nor could he resist the temptation, by a bold and sudden attack, to attempt to precipitate the retreat of the British, and drive

them, if not into the sea, at least into their ships, to which he doubted not they were ultimately bound.

This led to the battle of Busaco, which was fought on the 27th of September, 1810.

Upon that memorable day the British army was assembled on the Sierra, or ridge of the hills called Busaco. Masséna, by turning the extremity of the ridge, might have compelled the English general to recommence his retreat; but he meditated a direct attack on the position. It was made by five strong divisions of the French. Two attacked on the right, one of which, forcing its way to the top of the ridge, was bayoneted and driven headlong down; the other, suffering great loss from the fire, gave way before reaching the top. Three divisions attacked on the left, with nearly the same fate. Defeated upon such unfavourable ground, the enemy lost, it was computed, at least two thousand men slain, besides very many wounded. The moral effect of the battle of Busaco was immense. It assured both the English themselves, and the people of Portugal, that the retreat of Lord Wellington's army was not the effect of fear, but of a deliberate choice. It evinced, also, what degree of trust might be securely reposed in the Portuguese levies. «They had shown themselves worthy, of contending,» said Lord Wellington, in his official dispatch, « in the same ranks with Bri-

tish troops;" and they felt their own confidence rise as their merits became acknowledged.

The French army, declining any farther attack on the Sierra, proceeded to turn its extremity, and move upon Lisbon by the way of Coimbra. Here Masséna established a strong rear-guard with his hospitals and wounded; but the inspiration occasioned by the victory of Busaco had not yet subsided among the Portuguese. Colonel Trant, a British officer, who commanded a body of Portuguese militia, rushed gallantly into Coimbra, and carried the place by a sudden attack. About five thousand men, many of course wounded, with all the French hospital stores, fell into the hands of the Portuguese; and Masséna, who could not recover the place, suffered all the loss of stores and provisions which that city afforded as a depot, and which the fertile district in the neighbourhood might have enabled him to collect.

Great was the surprise of both armies, when the retreat of the British, and advance of the French, suddenly terminated. The former entered a regular position, which, by the utmost exertion of skill and labour, had been rendered almost impregnable, being most formidably protected by field-works and heavy guns. They found that the Tagus and port of Lisbon afforded them assurance of subsistence, even in plenty, and that their inferior-

ity in numbers was completely made up to them by the strength of their position.

The French, on the contrary, who had fondly expected to enter Lisbon as conquerors, found themselves in a country wasted by the hands of its cultivators; without hospitals or magazines in their rear; in front a foe, of whom they had lately felt the strength; and around, a hostile population, for the greater part in arms. If, in such a situation, Masséna could be said to besiege Lisbon, he was, nevertheless, in the utmost danger of suffering those extremities of famine which usually fall to the lot of the beleaguered party. He seemed, by some strange transmutation, to have changed lots with the natives of Lisbon, and to suffer all the evils which he expected to inflict.

The war now paused on both sides. Lord Wellington had reached the point of his defence. Masséna seemed at a loss where to commence his attack. The deer was turned to bay, but the dog sprung not. The eyes of all Europe were rested upon the Tagus, on whose banks were to be decided the pretensions to superiority asserted by two great generals in the name of two mighty nations. But that event was suspended for several months, during which it is fitting that we should resume the narrative of other matters.

CHAPTER III.

Change in Napoleon's Principles of Government—Causes leading to this.—Becomes suspicious of Talleyrand and Fouché—Remonstrates with the latter, who satisfies him for the time.—Fouché endeavours, without the knowledge of Napoleon, to ascertain the Views of England with respect to Peace—His Plan is defeated by a singular collision with a similar one of Napoleon, brought forward without the knowledge of his Minister —and Fouché is sent away as Governor-General of Rome—His Moral and Political Character—His Dismissal regretted.—Murmurings of the People against the Austrian Alliance, and its supposed Effects.—Continental System—Its object.—Ignorance of Napoleon of the actual Political Feelings of Great Britain—License System—Its Nature and Effects.—Louis Buonaparte—Endeavours in vain to defend Holland from the Effects of the Continental System—He abdicates the Throne, and retires to Gratz in Styria.—Holland is annexed to the French Empire—This step renders Napoleon extremely unpopular.

Since Buonaparte obtained, in 1804, the absolute rule of the French Republic, a change had been gradually taking place in his principles of government, and in the character of the statesmen whom he employed as his ministers and advisers. For the first two years,

and more, he had governed on the principle of a limited monarch, who avails himself of the best talents he can find among his subjects, and shows a deference to those who are distinguished, either for the political part which they have performed, or the share they possess in the good opinion of the public. Among his advisers at this period, we find many of the leading men of the Revolution; persons who, though they had been induced from various motives to see the rise of Napoleon with equanimity, and even to aid him, then their equal, in his attempt to climb to supreme power, yet still remembered in what relation he and they had originally stood to each other. In counselling an Emperor, these statesmen did it with the more freedom that they remembered a period when they were on a level with him, nay, perhaps, when they stood a good deal higher.

This period of his reign, during which Napoleon suffered the wild and powerful flights of his own ambition to be in some degree restrained and directed by the judgment of others, formed the most laudable and useful certainly, if not the most brilliant part of his career. But gradually as his power became augmented and consolidated, the Emperor began to prefer that class of complaisant ministers, who would rather reflect his own opinions, prefaced with additional recommendations and ar-

guments, than less courteously attempt to criticize and refute them.

The history of Napoleon justifies, or at least excuses him, for falling into this natural error. He felt, and justly, that he was the sole projector of his gigantic plans, and also, in a great measure, the agent who carried them through; and he was led to believe, that, because he did so much, he might as well do the whole. The schemes which he had himself originally formed were executed by his own military genius; and thus it seemed as if the advice of counsellors, so indispensable to other princes, might be unnecessary to a sovereign who had shown himself all-sufficient alike in the cabinet and in the field. Yet this, though a plausible, was a delusive argument, even though it appeared to be borne out by the actual fact. It may be true, that in Buonaparte's councils, few measures of consequence were suggested by his ministers, and that he himself generally took the lead in affairs of importance. But still it was of great consequence that such plans, having been proposed, should be critically weighed, and canvassed, by men of too much experience to be deceived by appearances, and too much courage to be prevented from speaking their mind. The advice of such men as Talleyrand and Fouché operated as a restraint upon schemes hastily adopted, or opinionatively maintained; and their influence, though unseen and un-

heard, save in the Imperial cabinet, might yet be compared to the keel of a vessel, which, though invisible, serves to steady her among the waves, and regulate the force by which she is propelled by her swelling canvas; or to the pendulum of a time-piece, which checks and controls the main-spring of the machinery. Yet though Buonaparte must have been sensible of these advantages, he was still more accessible to the feelings of jealousy, which made him suspect, that these statesmen were disposed rather to establish separate interests for themselves in the government and nation, than to hold themselves completely dependent on the Imperial authority.

The character of both Talleyrand and Fouché, indeed, authorized some such suspicion. They had been distinguished in the French Revolution before Napoleon's name had been heard of, were intimately acquainted with all the springs which had moved it, and retained, as Buonaparte might suspect, the inclination, and even the power, to interfere at some possible state crisis more effectually than accorded with his views of policy. He had gorged them indeed with wealth; but if he consulted his own bosom, he might learn that wealth is but an indifferent compensation for the loss of political power. In a word, he suspected that the great services which Talleyrand rendered him with regard to foreign relations,

and Fouché as minister of police, were calculated to raise them into necessary and indispensable agents, who might thus become, to a certain degree, independent of his authority. He doubted, moreover, that they still kept up relations with a political society called Philadelphes, consisting of old republicans and others, of different political creeds, but who were united in their views of obtaining some degree of freedom, either by availing themselves of such slender means of restraint as the constitution, so carefully purged of every means of opposing the Imperial will, might yet afford, or by waiting for some disaster befalling Napoleon which might render their voice potential.

The suspicions with which Buonaparte regarded his ministers did not rest on vague conjecture. While he was in Spain, he received information, appearing to indicate that a party was forming itself in the Legislative Assembly, the bond connecting which was opposition to the Imperial will. That body voted, it must be remembered, by ballot; and great was the surprise and alarm of the assembly, when black balls, disapproving a measure suggested to their consideration by government, were counted to the number of a hundred and twenty-five, being a full third of the members present.

An official note, dated from Valladolid, 4th

December, instantly recalled the presumptuous dissentients to a sense that the power of rejecting the laws laid before them in the Emperor's name, which they had attempted thus boldly to exercise, was only entrusted to them for show, but was meant to contain no really effectual power of control. The words of Napoleon, the friend, as has been pretended, of liberal institutions, are well worthy of remark. « Our evils,» he said, « have arisen in part from an exaggeration of ideas, which has tempted the Legislative Body to consider itself as representing the nation; an idea which is chimerical and even criminal, since implying a claim of representation which is vested in the Emperor alone. The Legislative Body ought to be called the Legislative Council—it does not possess the right of making laws, since it has not the right of propounding them. In the constitutional hierarchy, the Emperor, and the ministers his organs, are the first representatives of the nation. If any other pretensions, pretending to be constitutional, should pervert the principles of our monarchical constitution, every thing is undone.»

This is all very intelligible, and shows that in principle, if not in practice, the monarchical constitution of France rested upon the same basis of despotism which supports the monarchical constitution of Constantinople, where the Ulemats, or men of law, have an osten-

sible title to resist the Grand Signior's edicts, and are only exposed to the penalty of being pounded to death in a mortar, should they presume to exercise it. Yet, a member of the French Legislative Body might have been pardoned for being inquisitive on two subjects: 1st, he might wish to know, if that body, chosen by the people, though indeed not directly, did not represent their electors, whom was it that they did represent? 2dly, what was their real authority in the state, since they were not to enjoy the power of rejecting the overtures which the constitution contended should be laid before them, before they were passed into laws?

Buonaparte entertained strong suspicion that this recalcitrating humour, so suddenly testified by so complaisant an assembly, must have had the countenance of Talleyrand and of Fouché. So soon as he returned to Paris, therefore, he sounded the latter minister on the revolt in the Legislative Body, and desired his opinion on the sort of measures by which he had repressed it. Fouché had been too long a spy upon the private thoughts of others, to be capable of the weakness of betraying his own. He expatiated, in a tone of panegyric, on the decisive tone of the official note, affirmed that this was the only way to govern a kingdom, and added, that if any constitutional body arrogated the right of national represent-

ation, the sovereign had no choice but instantly to dissolve it. « If Louis XVI. had acted thus,» said the minister, « he might have been alive, and King of France at this day.» Astonished at the zeal and promptitude of this reply, Buonaparte looked for an instant with wonder at his minister, who thus avouched sentiments so different from those which had governed the earlier part of his political life. « And yet, Duke of Otranto,» said the Emperor to the ex-jacobin, «methinks you were yourself one of those whose voices sent Louis XVI. to the scaffold?»

« I was,» answered the supple statesman, without confusion or hesitation; « and it was the first service which I had the honour to render to your Majesty.»

This courtly answer saved the minister for the moment; but Napoleon did not the less continue to see in Fouché an object of suspicion and apprehension, whose power, owing to his having been so long at the head of the police, was immense; whose duplicity was unfathomable, and who evinced many indications of desiring to secure some separate individual authority, either by being too necessary to be dismissed, or too formidable to be offended.

Fouché himself has, indeed, admitted that he endeavoured to regulate the duties of his office, so as to secure as much power to him-

self as possible, and was desirous, out of a desire of popularity, as well as from respect for the virtue which he did not himself possess, to execute those duties with the least possible harm to individuals. His mode of transacting business with the Emperor was thus characteristically described by himself. A person of rank, one of the *détenus*, desirous of escaping from the durance in which he was confined, had been fortunate enough to engage the interest of Fouché in his behalf. He had received more than one intimation from this statesman that his passport would certainly be granted, but still it never received the Imperial signature; and Fouché, who began to fear that his own sincerity might be called in question, commenced one morning, in the presence of our informer, and of one of the distinguished generals of the empire, the following oblique explanation of the cause of his failure.

« You no doubt think yourself a brave man?» said he, addressing the general.

« Bah!» replied the other, entering into the same vein of raillery,—« Brave! brave as a hundred lions.»

« But I,» continued the statesman, « am much braver than you. Look you, I desire some favour, the liberation of a friend or the like; I watch the happy moment of access, select the moment of persuasion, am insinuating,

—eloquent,—at length, by argument or importunity, I am successful. Next day, the paper which should ratify the boon which I had requested, is rejected when offered, torn perhaps, or flung beneath a heap of petitions and supplications. Now, herein is displayed my courage, which consists in daring again and again to recommence the unacceptable suit, and, what is perhaps the last verge of audacity, to claim it as a promise, which, being once pledged, can only be redeemed by specific performance.»

In this confession we read the account of a minister, still possessing influence, but declining in favour, and already become the object of his sovereign's jealousy; to whose personal request a favour cannot be decently refused, although a promise, reluctantly conceded to importunity, is willingly forgotten, or at length tardily and disobligingly granted.

Standing on these terms with a master at once watchful and jealous, we cannot but be surprised at the audacity of Fouché, who feared not to affect a sort of independence, by anticipating the desires of Napoleon in the public service, and even in the Imperial family. A striking instance of the last occurred in his intrigue with Joséphine on the subject of the divorce; and perhaps it was his escape out of that former involvement, without loss of power or credit, which urged him to a second inter-

ference of a more public and national character, by which he endeavoured to sound the possibility of accomplishing a peace with England.

We may discover more than one motive for Fouché's proceeding in this most inportant business without either the knowledge or consent of Napoleon. He was aware that his master might have rendered it, in his way of treating, impossible, even at starting, to discover on what terms Great Britain would conclude peace, by stating as preliminaries certain concessions which it was probable would not be granted, but from which, once stated, Napoleon could not himself recede. If therefore, Fouché could find some secret mode of ascertaining upon what terms a treaty with England might really be obtained, he was doing a service to France, to Britain, to Napoleon himself, and to the world. It is not the Duke of Otranto, however, in particular, whom we would expect to incur disgrace, and even personal hazard, on mere public grounds. But, besides the pleasure which those who have long engaged in political intrigues find in carrying them on, until the habit becomes as inveterate as that of the gambler, we can see that Fouché might reasonably propose to himself an important accession of influence by the success of such a negotiation. If he could once acquire a knowledge of the price at which Na-

poleon might obtain that peace for which the world sighed in vain, he would become possessed of an influence over public opinion, both at home and abroad, which could not but render him a person of extreme importance; and if he was able to become the agent in turning such knowledge to advantage, and negotiating such an important treaty, he might fix himself even on Napoleon, as one of those ministers frequently met with in history, whom their sovereign may have disliked, but could not find means to dismiss.

Acting upon such motives, or on others which we can less easily penetrate, Fouché anxiously looked around, to consider what concessions France might afford to make, to soothe the jealousy of England; trusting it would be possible to come to some understanding with the British ministry, weakened by the loss of Mr Canning, and disheartened by the defeats sustained by the Spanish patriots, and the sinister event of the Walcheren expedition. The terms which he would have been willing to have granted, comprehended an assurance of the independence of the two kingdoms of Holland and Spain (as if such a guarantee could have availed any thing while these kingdoms had for sovereigns the brothers of Napoleon, men reigning as his prefects, and, we shall presently see, subject to removal at his pleasure), together with the

acknowledgment of the Sicilian monarchy in the present king, and that of Portugal in the house of Braganza. Monsieur Ouvrard, a gentleman who had been permitted to go to London on commercial business, was employed by Fouché to open this delicate and furtive negotiation with the Marquis of Wellesley. But the negotiation was disconcerted by a singular circumstance.

The idea of endeavouring to know on what terms peace could be obtained, had occurred to Napoleon as well as to Fouché; and the sovereign, on his part, unsuccessful as he had been on two occasions in his attempt to open a personal correspondence with the King of England, had followed the steps of his minister, in making Monsieur Labouchère, a commercial person, agent of a great Dutch mercantile establishment, the medium of communication with the British government. The consequence was, that Ouvrard, and the agent of the Emperor, neither of whom knew of the other's mission, entered about the same time into correspondence with the Marquis Wellesley, who, returned from his Spanish mission, tcas now Secretary at War. The British states-
him surprised at this double application,
four hoaturally suspicious of some intended
. 'rious feelhand broke off all correspondence
regret at the vrard and his competitor for the
'or.

Napoleon must naturally have been so highly incensed with Fouché for tampering without his consent in a matter of such vital consequence, that one is almost surprised to find him limiting the effects of his resentment to disgracing the minister. He sent for Fouché, and having extorted from him an avowal of his secret negotiation, he remarked, « So, then, you make peace or war without my leave? » The consequence was, that the Duke of Otranto was deprived of his office of Minister of Police, in which he was succeeded by Savary; and he was shortly after sent into a species of honourable exile, in the character of Governor-general of Rome. It cost Buonaparte no little trouble to redeem from the clutches of his late minister the confidential notes which he had himself written to him upon affairs of police. For a long time Fouché pretended that he had consigned these important documents to the flames; and it was not until he had before his eyes the alternative of submission or a dungeon, that he at length delivered up the Imperial warrants, containing, no doubt, much that would have been precious to history. Dismissed at present from the stage; we sha'a again meet with this bold statesman at 'while periods of our history, when, as is the bro- of some kinds of sea-fowl, his appe as his pre- dom failed to announce danger ee, subject to

The character of Fouché, together with the

ciple or morality, could scarcely be accounted even tolerable; but he had high talents, and in many points the soundness of his judgment led him to pursue and recommend moderate and beneficent measures, out of policy, if not from a higher motive. On other accounts, also, many of the French had some partiality to him; especially those who cast their eyes backward upon their national history, and regretted the total loss of that freedom, so eagerly longed for, so briefly possessed, and which they could never be properly said to have enjoyed; and to the recovery of which, in part at least, Fouché was understood to be favourable as far as he could or dared. The remnant of the sterner Republicans might despise him as a time-server, yet they respected him, at the same time, as a relic of the Revolution, and on different occasions experienced his protection. To the Royalists also he had been courteous, and so decidedly so, as encouraged one of the boldest agents of the Bourbons to penetrate to his presence, and endeavour to bring him over to the cause of the exiled family. Fouché dismissed him, indeed, with a peremptory refusal to listen to his proposal; but he did not deliver him to the police, and he allowed him twenty-four hours to leave the kingdom. These various feelings occasioned to many, alarm and regret at the dismissal of the Duke of Otranto.

3.

The disgrace of this able minister seemed the more portentous, that shortly before it occurred, the terrible charge of which he was about to be deprived had received an alarming extension of jurisdiction. The number of state prisons was extended from one, being the old tower of Vincennes, to no less than six, situated in different parts of France.[1] These Bastilles, chiefly old Gothic castles, were destined to be the abode of captives, whom the government described as persons who could not be convicted of any crime perpetrated, but whom, as entertaining dangerous thoughts and principles, it was not safe to permit to remain at large. The *lettre de cachet*, by authority of which these victims of political suspicion were to be secluded from liberty, was to consist in a decree of the Privy Council, which might have been as well termed the pleasure of the Emperor. This measure was adopted on the 3d of March, 1810, upon a report made to the Council of State in the name of Fouché, and agreed to by them; but it was well understood, that, in this and similar instances, the individual at the head of any department was obliged to father the obloquy of such measures as Napoleon desired to intro-

[1] Saumur, Ham, Landskaone, Pierre-Châtel, and Fenestrelle

duce into it. The Minister of Police was there fore held guiltless of recommending an extension of the government's encroachments 'upon public liberty; which, in fact, were the exclusive device of Napoleon and his Privy Council.

It was another unfortunate circumstance for Napoleon, that the observers of the times ascribed the dismissal of the old Republican counsellors, and the more rigorous measures adopted against political malcontents, to the influence of the Austrian alliance. With many persons in France, Buonaparte, as the Heir of the Revolution, might, like Danton, Robespierre, and others, have exercised the most despotic authority, providing he claimed his right to do so by and through the Revolution. But they could not endure to see the Emperor Napoleon, while exercising the same authority with a thousand times more lenity, attempt to improve his right to the submission of his subjects by an alliance with one of the ancient houses of Europe, against whom the principles of the Revolution had declared eternal war. Every class of politicians has its fanatics, and in that of the ancient Jacobins were many who would rather have perished by the short, sharp terrors of the Republican guillotine, than survived to linger in a dungeon during the pleasure of a son-in-law of the Emperor of Germany. Such ideas, inconsistent as they were in themselves,

and utterly irreconcilable with the quiet, gentle, and irreproachable character of Maria Louisa, who could never be justly accused of even attempting to influence her husband' upon any political subject, circulated, nevertheless, and were even accredited in political society. There was indeed this argument in their favour, that no other motive could be assigned for Buonaparte's sparing Austria when she was lying at his mercy, and chusing a partner out of her royal family, than the desire of allying himself with the house of Hapsburg, and of gaining such access as could be attained by such an alliance to a share in the rights and privileges of the most ancient hereditary dynasty of Europe. But in approaching to that fraternal alliance with legitimate royalty, Napoleon proportionally abandoned those revolutionary principles and associates, by whose means he had first climbed to power; and by this change, rather of the basis of his authority than of the authority itself, he offended many of the republicans, without effectually gaining the aristocrats, to whom his new connexion might have seemed a recommendation. Indeed, when his right to sovereignty was considered without reference to his possession, and his power to maintain it, Napoleon was in some measure censured like the bat in the fable. The democrats urged against him his matrimonial alliance with a house of

the ancient régime; while the aristocrats held him disqualified, on account of the origin of his power under the revolutionary system.

But although such objections existed among the zealots of both political factions, the great body of the French people would have cared little on what principle Napoleon had ascribed his title to the Imperial crown, providing he had but been contented to allow the subject and himself the advantage of a short repose from wars and conquests. This tranquillity, however, was becoming every day less probable, for new incidents seemed to dictate new acquisitions to the empire; and, unhappily for his own and other countries, the opportunity of aggrandizement was with Buonaparte all that it wanted to recommend it, and the pressure of the occasion was always a complete justification of any measure which the time rendered expedient.

That which now chiefly occupied him, since the overtures for peace with England had been rendered abortive by the collision of his own confidential emissary with that of Fouché, was the destruction of the strength, and the sapping of the resources of that country, by dint of enforcing and extending what he called the European Continental System; which consisted of the abolition of all commerce, and the reducing each nation, as in the days of primitive barbarism, to remain satisfied with its own

productions, however inadequate to the real or artificial wants to which its progress in society had gradually given rise.

Like most foreigners, Napoleon understood little or nothing of the constitutional opinions, or influential principles, belonging to England. He was well acquainted with human character, as modified by the governments and customs of France and Italy; but this experience no more qualified him to judge of the English character, than the most perfect acquaintance with the rise and fall of the Mediterranean, amounting to five or six inches in height, would prepare a navigator to buffet with the powerful tides which burst and foam on the shores of the British islands. The information which he received from that hostile country, Buonaparte construed according to his wishes; and when it was supplied by private intelligencers, they were of course desirous of enhancing the value of what they told, by exaggerating its importance. It was, indeed, no difficult task to impose on a statesman, ignorant enough of the present state of North Britain to believe, that he could, even at this time of day, have disturbed the security of the reigning family, by landing in Scotland some candidate, having pretensions to the crown through the house of Stuart. With the same inaccuracy, he concluded every warm speech in Parliament a summons to revolt—every

temporary riot or testimony of popular displeasure, from whatever cause, a commencement of open rebellion. He could not be convinced, that from the peculiarity of the English constitution, and the temper of her people, such disturbances and such violent debates must frequently exist; and although, like eruptions on the human body, they are both unpleasant and unseemly, they are yet the price at which sound internal health is preserved

Actuated by such erroneous views as we have stated, Napoleon conceived that in 1810 he saw in England the important results of his Continental System, or interdiction of British commerce with the Continent.

The associations of the Luddites, as they were called, were at this time giving great disturbance in the manufacturing districts of England. These, it is well known, were framed to prevent the introduction of looms wrought by machinery, or power-looms, to the superseding the ordinary looms wrought by hand. The cause would have equally existed, and the discontent also, if the Continental System had never been heard of; for such discontent must and will exist in every trade where a number of men are suddenly thrown out of employment by the introduction of abbreviated means of labour. Yet Napoleon never doubted that these heart-burnings, and

the violence of the Parliamentary debates, arose entirely from the new mode he had found of striking at Great Britain by the destruction of her commerce. He, therefore, as we shall presently see, examined all Europe, with the intention of shutting every creek and fishing-port, through which cargoes of muslins or cotton goods could by possibility penetrate; and the absolute authority which he could exercise over the whole Continent, with the exception of Russia, and of the « still vexed» Peninsula, entitles us to compare him to the heedful governor of a jail, who traverses his gloomy dominions at stated hours, striking with his hammer every bar to ascertain that it rings sound, and proving every lock, to see that no secret means of communication exists with the free part of humanity. Thus commerce, the silken tie which binds nations to each other, whose influence is so salutary to all states, so essential to the very existence of many, was in danger of being totally abrogated, unless in as far as it was carried on by a system of licenses.

The adoption of this system, which went in a great measure to counteract the effects of that very Continental System which he made it such an especial point to press and enforce upon all neutral powers, was a singular sacrifice made by Napoleon, partly to necessity, partly to the desire of accumulating treasure.

The license system was a relaxation of the continental blockade, of which England had set the example by giving protections to such neutral vessels as, clearing out from a British port, had a certain proportion of their cargo made up of British goods or colonial produce. This was what, in mercantile language, is termed a real transaction—the British merchandise was purchased by such as designed to make a profit, by selling it again upon any part of the Continent to which they might be able to introduce it. Buonaparte, in like manner, granted Imperial licenses, purchased for large sums of money, by which trading vessels were permitted to import a certain quantity of colonial produce, on condition of exporting an equal proportion of French manufactures. This system differed from that of England, in this important respect, that the demand for articles of the French manufactures was entirely simulated. The goods were not wanted in Britain, could not be re-sold there without payment of heavy duties, and were often thrown into the sea in preference to discharging the English duties upon them. Editions of books, a commodity thus exported, and thus disposed of, were wittily said to be *ad usum Delphini.* The prime cost at which these French goods had been purchased, in compliance with Buonaparte's regulations, was of course laid upon the colonial goods, which were the only actual subject

of trade. Thus, if the French manufacturers derived any profit from the transaction, it was raised, not by their goods being exported and sold in foreign countries, in the usual course of trade, but by the prime cost being imposed as a tax upon the colonial produce imported; and the price was paid, of course, not by the foreign market, which the goods seldom reached, but by the French consumers of sugar, rum, and coffee.

The real temptation for continuing this attempt to force a trade was, as we have seen, the impossibility of dispensing with colonial produce entirely, and the large revenue accruing to the French government from these licenses, who, in this manner, exercising a complete monopoly in a trade which they interdicted to all others, made immense additions to the treasure which almost choked the vaults of the pavilion Marsan, in the Tuileries.

The language held by the minister of Napoleon, to the powers thus affected, amounted therefore to the following proposition:—« You shall shut your ports against British commodities; for, without your doing so, it will be impossible for the Emperor Napoleon to humble the Mistress of the Seas. But while you are thus deprived of all commerce, whether passive or active, Napoleon reserves to himself, by the system of license, the privilege of purchasing and dealing in the commodities of Bri-

tain and her colonies, which, reaching your country by any other mode than through his permission, will be subject to confiscation, nay, to destruction.»

At a later period, Buonaparte greatly regretted that he had suffered the emolument derived from the license-trade, to seduce him into relaxing his Continental System. He seems to lament having relinquished his supposed advantage, as a vindictive freebooter might regret his having been reduced to let go his hold on his enemy's throat, by the tempting opportunity of plunging his hand into the pocket of a by-stander. The injustice which thus imposed on neutrals the necessity of abstaining from a lucrative commerce, which France, the belligerent power, reserved to herself the privilege of carrying on in such degree as she might find convenient, was of so crying a description, that, at any other time than during the irresistible ascendancy of Napoleon, the very mention of it would have revolted all Europe. And even as times stood, the non-compliance with terms so harsh and unjust, cost the fall of two European thrones, ere it became the means of undermining that of Napoleon himself.

The first of the royal sufferers was the brother of Napoleon, Louis Buonaparte, who had been created King of Holland. By every account which we have been able to collect, Louis was an amiable, well-intentioned, and

upright man, of a romantic disposition, and a melancholic complexion, which he had increased by studying the sentimental philosophy of Rousseau. But he was, in his brother's language, an ideologist;* that is, one who is disposed to do that which is right according to principle, rather than that which circumstances render expedient. He was embarrassed by some family disputes, and lived on indifferent terms with his wife, who was a greater favourite with Napoleon than was Louis himself. Since he had been under the necessity of accepting the crown of Holland, he had endeavoured to afford that country all the protection which could be derived from his near relationship to Napoleon; and if he could not save his subjects entirely from the evils of a conquered and dependent state, he endeavoured to diminish these as much as his means permitted. The Dutch, a calm and deliberate people, gave Louis full credit for his efforts, and, in general, regarded him as their friend and protector. But at the period we treat of, the evils which approached their state were far beyond Louis's power to avert or even to modify. Other countries may have more or less of a commercial character, but Holland exists by commerce entirely. It was the influence of commerce which gained her amphibious territory from the waves, and, were that influence withdrawn, her fair towns must again become fishing-vil-

lages; her rich pastures must return to their original state of salt-water marshes, shallows, and sand-banks. The French exactions already paid, to the amount of one hundred millions of francs, had purchased, as the natives of Holland fondly imagined, some right to exert the small means of commerce which remained to them, and which, under King Louis's sanction, were almost entirely engaged in traffic with England, now declared contraband.

Napoleon used threats and commands to induce Louis to bring his subjects to a more rigorous observance of the Continental System, while Louis employed expostulation and entreaty in behalf of the nation over whom he had been called to rule. Each brother grew more obstinate in his opinion, and at length, as the Emperor began to see that neither fear nor favour could induce Louis to become the agent of oppression in Holland, his removal from that country was distinctly pointed at as the consequence of his obstinacy. It was intimated, in a report by Champagny, the Duc de Cadore, that the situation of Louis on the throne of Holland was rendered critical, by his feelings being divided betwixt the imprescriptible duties which he owed to France, and to his family, and the interest which it was natural he should take in the welfare of Dutch commerce. To terminate this strife in his brother's mind, the report informed the public

that Napoleon meant to recal the prince of his blood whom he had placed on the Dutch throne, since the first duty of a French prince, having a place in the succession to that monarchy, was to France exclusively; and it was intimated, that Holland, divested of her king, and her nominal independence, would be reduced to the condition of a province of France, occupied by French troops, and French officers of the revenue; and thus deprived of the means of thwarting the Continental System, so necessary for the subjugation of Britain, by the obstinate continuance of commercial intercourse with a nation under the ban of the empire.

This report is peculiarly interesting, as explanatory of Buonaparte's views respecting the rights and regal authority of the sovereigns whom he created and displaced at pleasure, as the interests of France, or rather as his own, required, or seemed to require. Either, however, Napoleon became, for the moment, ashamed to acknowledge this fact so broadly; or he thought that such a contradiction of his repeated declarations might have a bad effect upon the Westphalian subjects of Jérôme, and upon the Spaniards, whom he desired to become those of Joseph; or, perhaps, the remonstrances of Louis produced some temporary effect upon his mind; for he stopped short in his full purpose, and on the 16th March concluded a treaty with Louis, the terms of which

were calculated, it was said, to arrange disputed points betwixt the sovereigns, and render the independence of Holland consistent with the necessary conformity to the Continental System.

By this treaty, Zealand, Dutch Brabant, and the whole course of the Rhine, as well the right as the left bank, were transferred from Holland to France. French officers of the customs were to be placed in all the Dutch harbours; eighteen thousand troops were to be maintained by the kingdom of Holland, of whom six thousand were to be French; a fleet was to be fitted out by the same kingdom for the service of France; English manufactures were to be prohibited by the Dutch government; and other restrictions were subscribed to by Louis, in hopes his brother's stern resolution might be so far softened as to leave the remaining portions of the territories of Holland in a state of nominal independence. But he was soon made sensible that this was no part of Napoleon's intentions. Instead of six thousand French troops, twenty thousand were assembled at Utrecht, with the purpose of being poured into Holland. Instead of this foreign soldiery being stationed on the coasts, where alone their presence could be requisite to prevent the contraband trade, which was the sole pretext of introducing them at all, Louis was informed, that they were to take military pos-

session of the whole country; and that the head-quarters of this army, which was totally independent of his authority, were to be established at Amsterdam, his capital.

Seeing himself thus deprived by his brother of all power in the kingdom which was still called his, Louis generously refused to play the pageant part of a monarch, who could neither exert his rights nor protect his subjects.

On the 1st of July he executed a deed of abdication in favour of his son, then a minor, expressing an affectionate hope, that though he himself had been so unhappy as to offend his brother the Emperor, he would not, nevertheless, visit with his displeasure his innocent and unoffending family. In a letter from Haarlem, dated the 1st July, Louis enlarged on the causes of his abdication, in a manner honourable to his head and his heart, and with a moderation, when he spoke of his brother, which gave weight to his just complaints. « He could not, » he said, « consent to retain the mere title of king, separated from all real authority in his kingdom, his capital, or even his palace. He should be in such a case the witness of all that passed, without the power of influencing the current of events for the good of his people, yet remaining responsible for evils which he could neither remedy nor prevent. He had long foreseen the extremity to which he was now reduced, but could not

avoid it without sacrificing his most sacred duties, without ceasing to bear at heart the happiness of his people, and to connect his own fate with that of the country. This,» he said, «was impossible. Perhaps,» he continued, «I am the only obstacle to the reconciliation of Holland with France. Should that prove the case, I may find some consolation in dragging out the remainder of a wandering and languishing life, at a distance from my family, my country, and the good people of Holland, so lately my subjects.»

Having finished his vindication, and adjusted means for making it public, which he could only do by transmitting it to England, the Ex-King of Holland entertained a chosen party of friends at his palace at Haarlem until near midnight, and then, throwing himself into a plain carriage which was in attendance, left behind him the kingly name and the kingly revenue, rather than hold them without the power of discharging the corresponding duties of a sovereign. Louis retired to Gratz, in Styria, where he lived in a private manner, upon a moderate pension, amusing his leisure with literature. His more ambitious consort, with a much more ample revenue, settled herself at Paris, where her wit and talents, independent of her connexion with Napoleon, attracted around her the world of fashion, of which she was a distinguished ornament.

Buonaparte, as was to have been expected, paid no regard to the claim of Louis's son, in whose favour his father had abdicated. He created that young person Grand Duke of Berg, and, although he was yet a child, he took an opportunity to make him a speech, which we have elsewhere adverted to, in which, after inculpating the conduct of his brother, the tenor of which he stated could be accounted for by *malady* alone, he explained in few words the duties incurred by his satellite sovereigns. « Never forget, that whatever position you may be required to occupy, in order to conform to my line of politics, and the interest of my empire, your first duty must always regard ME, your second must have reference to France. All your other duties, even those towards the countries which I commit to your charge, are secondary to these primary obligations.»

Thus was the leading principle clearly announced, upon which the nominal independence of kingdoms allied to France was in future to be understood as resting. The monarchs, to whom crowns were assigned, were but to be regarded as the lieutenants of the kingdoms in which they ruled; and whatever part the interest of their dominions might call upon them to act, they were still subject, in the first instance, to the summons and control of their liege lord the Emperor, and compelled to prefer what his pleasure should term the

weal of France, to every other call of duty whatsoever.

The fate of Holland was not long undecided. Indeed it had probably been determined on as far back as Champagny's first report, in which it had been intimated, that Holland, with all its provinces, was to become an integral part of France. This was contrary to the pledge given by Napoleon to the Senate, that the Rhine should be considered as the natural boundary of France; nor was it less inconsistent with his pretended determination, that the independence of Holland should be respected and maintained. But both these engagements yielded to the force of the reasoning used by his mouth-piece Champagny, in recommending the union of Holland with the French empire, and with France itself. They are worth quoting, were it only to show how little men of sense are ashamed to produce the weakest and most inconsistent arguments, when they speak as having both the power and the settled purpose to do wrong.

«Holland,» said the minister, whose very effrontery renders his arguments interesting, «is in a manner an emanation from the territory of France, and is necessary to the full complement of the empire. To possess the entire Rhine» (which had been proposed as the natural boundary of France), «your Majesty must extend the frontier to the Zuyder-Zee. Thus

the course of all the rivers which arise in France, or which bathe her frontier, will belong to her as far as the sea. To leave in the hands of strangers the mouths of our rivers, would be, Sire, to confine your power to an ill-bounded monarchy, instead of extending its dominions to the natural limits befitting an imperial throne.»

On such precious reasoning (much on a par with the claim which Napoleon set up to Great Britain as the natural appendage of France, along with the Isle of Oleron), Holland was, 9th July, 1810, declared an integral part of the French empire.

But the usurpation was not unavenged. It cost Buonaparte a greater declension in public opinion than had arisen even from his unprincipled attempts on Spain. It is true, none of the bloody and extensively miserable consequences had occurred in Holland, which had been occasioned by the transactions at Bayonne. But the seizure of Holland brought Buonaparte's worst fault, his ambition, before the public, in a more broad and decided point of view.

There were people who could endure his robbing strangers, who were yet shocked that he, so fond of his kindred, and in general so liberal to them, should not have hesitated to dethrone his own brother, merely for entertaining sentiments becoming the rank to which

he had been raised by himself; to disinherit his nephew; to go nigh taxing so near a relation with mental imbecility; and all on so slight a provocation;—for the only real point of difference, that, viz. respecting the English commerce, had been yielded by Louis in the treaty which Napoleon had signed, but only, it seemed, for the purpose of breaking it. It was observed, too, that in the manly but respectful opposition, made by Louis to his brother's wishes, there appeared nothing to provoke the displeasure of Napoleon, though one of the most irritable of men on subjects with which his ambition was implicated. It seemed a species of gratuitous violence, acted as if to show that no circumstance of relationship, family feeling, or compassion (to make no mention of justice or moderation), could interfere with or check the progress of Napoleon's ambition; and whilst the more sanguine prophesied, that he who ran so rashly might one day run himself to a close, all agreed that his empire, composed of such heterogeneous parts, could not, in all probability, survive the mortal date of the founder, supposing it to last so long. In the mean time it was evident, that the condition of no state, however solemnly guaranteed by Buonaparte himself, could be considered as secure or free from change while it was subject to his influence. To conclude the whole, the Dutch were informed by the

Emperor with bitter composure, that «he had hoped to unite them to France as allies, by giving them a prince of his own blood as a ruler; that his hopes, however, had been deceived; and that he had shown more forbearance than consisted with his character, or than his rights required;»—thus intimating some farther and unexpressed severity, which he might have felt himself justified in adding to the virtual exile of his brother, and the confiscation of his late dominions; and insinuating, that the Dutch had escaped cheaply with the loss of their separate national existence.

CHAPTER IV.

Gustavus IV. of Sweden is Dethroned and succeeded by his Uncle.—The Crown Prince Killed by a fall from his horse.—Candidates proposed for the Succession.—The Swedes, *thinking to conciliate Napoleon*, meditate fixing on Bernadotte, Prince of Ponte Corvo.—Reasons for supposing that the choice was not altogether agreeable to Buonaparte—who reluctantly acquiesces in the choice.—Parting Interview between Bernadotte and Napoleon.—Subsequent attempts of the latter to bind Sweden to the policy of France.—The Crown Prince unwillingly accedes to the Continental System.—Napoleon makes a Tour through Flanders and Holland—returns to Paris, and takes measures for extending the Continental System.—Seizure of the Valois.—Coast along the German Ocean annexed to France.—Protest by the Czar against the appropriation of Oldenburg.—Russia allows the importation, at certain Sea-ports, of various articles of British commerce.—Negotiations for exchange of Prisoners between France and England, and for a general Peace, broken off by Buonaparte's unreasonable Demands.

In the destruction of the kingdom of Holland, a new sceptre, and that of Napoleon's own forming, was broken, as he wrenched it out of

the hands of his brother. In the case of Sweden, and in hopes of insuring the patronage of the French Emperor, or averting his enmity, a diadem was placed on the brows of one who, like Napoleon himself, had commenced his career as a soldier of fortune.

We have repeatedly observed, that the high spirit and intrepid enterprise of Gustavus IV., unsupported as they were either by distinguished military abilities, or by effectual power, seemed as if he aped the parts of Gustavus Adolphus or Charles XII., without considering the declined condition of the country he governed, or the inferiority of his own talents. Sweden had suffered great losses by the daring manner in which this prince maintained the ancient principles of aristocracy against the overwhelming power of France.

Pomerania, being the only dominion belonging to Sweden on the south side of the Baltic, had been taken possession of by France in the war of 1806-7; and Russia, who had been a party to that war, and who had encouraged Gustavus to maintain it, had, since changing her politics at the treaty of Tilsit, herself declared war against Sweden, for the sole and undisguised purpose of possessing herself of Finland, which she had succeeded in appropriating. Sweden had, therefore,

lost, under this ill-fated monarch, above one-third of her territories, and the inhabitants became anxious to secure, even were it by desperate measures, the independence of that which remained. There were fears lest Russia should aspire to the conquest of the rest of the ancient kingdom—fears that France might reward the adhesion and the sufferings of Denmark, by uniting the crown of Sweden with that of Denmark and Norway, and aiding the subjugation of the country with an auxiliary army. While these calamities impended over their ancient state, the Swedes felt confident that Gustavus was too rash to avert the storm by submission, too weak, and perhaps too unlucky, to resist its violence. This conviction led to a conspiracy, perhaps one of the most universal known in history.

The unfortunate king was seized upon and made prisoner in March, 1809, without any other resistance than his own unassisted sword could maintain; and so little were the conspirators afraid of his being able to find a party in the state desirous of replacing him in the government, that they were content he should have his liberty, and a suitable pension, on his agreeing to consider himself as an exile from Sweden; in which sentence of banishment, with little pretence to justice, his wife, sister of the Empress of Russia, and his children,

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comprehending the heir of his crown, were also included.

The Duke of Sudermania, uncle of the dethroned prince, was called to the throne, and the succession of the kingdom was destined to Christian of Augustenberg, a prince of the house of Holstein. Peace was made by the new king with Russia, at the expense of ceding Finland and the Isle of Aland to that power. Soon afterwards a treaty was signed at Paris, by which Charles XIII. promised to adhere to the Continental System, and to shut his ports against all British commerce, with certain indulgences on the articles of salt and colonial produce. In requital, Napoleon restored to Sweden her continental province of Pomerania, with the Isle of Rugen, reserving, however, such dotations or pensions as he had assigned to his soldiers, or followers, upon those territories. But though the politics of Sweden were thus entirely changed, its revolution was destined to proceed.

The king being aged, the eyes of the people were much fixed on the successor, or Crown Prince, who took upon himself the chief labour of the government, and appears to have given satisfaction to the nation. But his government was of short duration. On the 28th of May, 1810, while reviewing some

troops, he suddenly fell from his horse, and expired on the spot, leaving Sweden again without any head excepting the old king. This event agitated the whole nation, and various candidates were proposed for the succession of the kingdom.

Among these was the King of Denmark, who, after the sacrifices he had made for Buonaparte, had some right to expect his support. The son of the late unfortunate monarch, rightful heir of the crown, and named like him Gustavus, was also proposed as a candidate. The Duke of Oldenburg, brother-in-law of the Emperor of Russia, had partisans. To each of these candidates there lay practical objections. To have followed the line of lawful succession, and called Gustavus to the throne (which could not be forfeited by his father's infirmity, so far as he was concerned), would have been to place a child at the head of the state, and must have inferred, amid this most arduous crisis, all the doubts and difficulties of chusing a regent. Such choice might, too, be the means, at a future time, of reviving his father's claim to the crown. The countries of Denmark and Sweden had been too long rivals, for the Swedes to subject themselves to the yoke of the King of Denmark; and to chuse the Duke of Oldenburg would

have been, in effect, to submit themselves to Russia, of whose last behaviour towards her Sweden had considerable reason to complain.

In this embarrassment they were thought to start a happy idea, who proposed to conciliate Napoleon by bestowing the ancient crown of the Goths upon one of his own marshals, and a high noble of his empire, namely John Julian Baptiste Bernadotte, Prince of Ponte Corvo. This distinguished officer was married to a sister of Joseph Buonaparte's wife (daughter of a wealthy and respectable individual, named Clary), through whom he had the advantage of an alliance with the Imperial family of Napoleon, and he had acquired a high reputation in the north of Europe, both when governor of Hanover, and administrator of Swedish Pomerania. On the latter occasion, Bernadotte was said to have shown himself in a particular manner the friend and protector of the Swedish nation; and it was even insinuated that he would not be averse to exchange the errors of Popery for the reformed tenets of Luther. The Swedish nation fell very generally into the line of policy which prompted this choice. Humiliating as it might at another period have been to a people proud of their ancient renown, to chuse for their

master a foreign soldier, differing from them in birth and religious faith, such an election yet promised to place at the head of the nation a person admirably qualified to comprehend and encounter the difficulties of the time; and it was a choice, sure, as they thought, to be agreeable to him upon whose nod the world seemed to depend.

Yet, there is the best reason to doubt, whether, in preferring Bernadotte to their vacant throne, the Swedes did a thing which was gratifying to Napoleon. The name of the Crown Prince of Sweden elect had been known in the wars of the Revolution, before that of Buonaparte had been heard of. Bernadotte had been the older, therefore, though certainly not the better soldier. On the 18th Brumaire, he was so far from joining Buonaparte in his enterprise against the Council of Five Hundred, notwithstanding all advances made to him, that he was on the spot at St Cloud armed and prepared, had circumstances permitted, to place himself at the head of any part of the military, who might be brought to declare for the Directory. And although, like every one else, Bernadotte submitted to the Consular system, and held the government of Holland under Buonaparte, yet then, as well as under the empire, he was always understood to belong to a class of officers, whom Napoleon

employed indeed, and rewarded, but without loving them, or perhaps relying on them more than he was compelled to do, although their character was in most instances a warrant for their fidelity.

These officers formed a comparatively small class, yet comprehending some of the most distinguished names in the French army, who, in seeing the visionary Republic glide from their grasp, had been, nevertheless, unable to forget the promises held out to them by the earlier dawn of the Revolution. Reconciled by necessity to a state of servitude which they could not avoid, this party considered themselves as the soldiers of France, not of Napoleon, and followed the banner of their country rather than the fortunes of the Emperor. Without being personally Napoleon's enemies, they were not the friends of his despotic power; and it was to be expected, should any opportunity occur, that men so thinking would make a stand, for the purpose of introducing some modifications into the arbitrary system which the Emperor had established.

Napoleon, always deeply politic, unless when carried off by sudden bursts of temperament, took, as already mentioned, great care in his distribution of duties and honours, at once to conceal from the public the existence of a difference in opinion among his general officers,

and also to arm the interests of those patriots themselves against their own speculative opinions, by rendering the present state of things too beneficial to them for their being easily induced to attempt any change. Still it may nevertheless be conceived, that it was not out of this class of lukewarm adherents he would have voluntarily selected a candidate for a kingdom, which, being removed at some distance from the influence of France, he would more willingly have seen conferred on some one, whose devotion to the will of his Emperor was not likely to be disturbed by any intrusion of conscientious patriotism.

But, besides the suspicion entertained by Napoleon of Bernadotte's political opinions, subjects of positive discord had recently arisen between them. Bernadotte had been blamed by the Emperor for permitting the escape of La Romana and the Spaniards, as already mentioned. At a latter period, he was commander of the Saxon troops in the campaign of Wagram; and, notwithstanding a set of very scientific manœuvres, by which he detained General Bellegarde on the frontiers of Bohemia, when his presence might have been essentially useful to the Archduke Charles, he was censured by Napoleon as tardy in his movements.

The landing of the English at Walcheren

induced Fouché, as has been already said, with the concurrence of Clarke, then Minister at War, to intrust Bernadotte with the charge of the defence of Flanders and Holland. But neither in this service had he the good fortune to please the Emperor. Fouché, at whose instance he had accepted the situation, was already tottering in office; and the ill-selected expression, «that however necessary Napoleon was to the glory of France, yet his presence was not indispensable to repel invasion,» was interpreted into a magnifying of themselves at the expense of the Emperor. Napoleon made his displeasure manifest by depriving Bernadotte of the command in Belgium, and sending him back to the north of Germany; and it is said that the general, on his part, was so little inclined to make a secret of his resentment, that he was remarked as a fiery Gascon, who, if he should ever have an opportunity, would be likely to do mischief.

But while such were the bad terms betwixt the Emperor and his general, the Swedes, unsuspicious of the true state of the case, imagined, that in chusing Bernadotte for successor to their throne, they were paying to Buonaparte the most acceptable tribute. And, notwithstanding that Napoleon was actually at variance with Bernadotte, and although, in a political view, he would much rather have

given his aid to the pretensions of the King of Denmark, he was under the necessity of reflecting, that Sweden retained a certain degree of independence; that the sea separated her shores from his armies; and that, however willing to conciliate him, the Swedes were not in a condition absolutely to be compelled to receive laws at his hand. It was necessary to acquiesce in their choice, since he could not dictate to them; and by doing so he might at the same time exhibit another splendid example of the height to which his service conducted his generals, of his own desire to assist their promotion, and of that which might be much more doubtful than the two first propositions,—of his willingness to pay deference to the claims of a people in electing their chief magistrate. When, therefore, Bernadotte, protesting that he would be exclusively guided by Napoleon's wishes in pursuing or relinquishing this important object, besought him for his countenance with the States of Sweden, who were to elect the Crown Prince, Buonaparte answered, that he would not interfere in the election by any solicitations or arguments, but that he gave the Prince of Ponte Corvo his permission to be a candidate, and should be well pleased if he proved a successful one. Such is Napoleon's account of the transaction. We have, however, been favoured with some

manuscript observations, in which a very different colour is given to Napoleon's proceedings, and which prove distinctly, that while Napoleon treated the Crown Prince Elect of Sweden with fair language, he endeavoured by underhand intrigues to prevent the accomplishment of his hopes.[1]

The Swedes, however, remained fixed in their choice, notwithstanding the insinuations of Désaugiers, the French envoy, whom Napoleon afterwards affected to disown and recal, for supporting, in the diet of Orebro, the interest of the King of Denmark, instead of that of Bernadotte.

Napoleon's cold assent, or rather an assurance that he would not dissent, being thus wrung reluctantly from him, Bernadotte, owing to his excellent character among the Swedes, and their opinion of his interest with Napoleon, was chosen Crown Prince of Sweden by the States of that kingdom, 21st August, 1810. Napoleon, as he himself acknowledges, was enabled to resist, though with difficulty, a strong temptation to retract his consent, and defeat the intended election. Perhaps this unfriendly disposition might be in some degree overcome by the expectation, that by

[1] See Appendix, No. I. Reflections on the conduct of Napoleon towards the Crown Prince of Sweden.

their present choice the Emperor of France would secure the accession of Sweden to the anti-commercial system; whereas, by attempting a game which he was not equally sure of winning, he might, indeed, have disappointed a man whom he loved not, but by doing so must run the risk of throwing the States of Sweden, who were not likely to be equally unanimous in behalf of any other French candidate, into the arms of England, his avowed foe; or of Russia, who, since the treaty of Schœnbrun, and Napoleon's union with the house of Austria, could only be termed a doubtful and cloudy friend.

But he endeavoured to obtain from Bernadotte some guarantee of his dependence upon France and its Emperor. He took the opportunity of making the attempt when Bernadotte applied to him for letters of emancipation from his allegiance to France, which could not decently be withheld from the Prince Royal of another country. « The expediting of the letters patent, » said Napoleon, « has been retarded by a proposal made by the Council, that Bernadotte should previously bind himself never to bear arms against Napoleon. » Bernadotte exclaimed against a proposal which must have left him in the rank of a French general. The Emperor was ashamed to persist in a demand so unreasonable, and dismissed him

with the almost prophetic words,—« Go—our destinies must be accomplished.» He promised the Prince Royal two millions of francs as an indemnity for the principality of Ponte Corvo, and other possessions which had been assigned to him in Holland, and which he restored on ceasing to be a subject of France. It is singular enough that Napoleon, while at St Helena, permitted himself to assert that he had made a present of this money (of which only one million was ever paid), to enable Bernadotte to take possession of his new dignity with becoming splendour.

To bring the affairs of Sweden to a close for the present, we may here add, that, though that nation were desirous to escape the renewal of the desperate and hopeless struggle with France, they were most unwilling, nevertheless, to lose the advantages of their commerce with England. The conduct of the national business soon devolved entirely upon the Crown Prince, the age and infirmities of the king not permitting him to conduct them any longer. It became Bernadotte's, or, as he was now named, Charles John's difficult and delicate task, to endeavour at once to propitiate France, and to find excuses which might dispose Buonaparte to grant some relaxation on the subject of the Continental System. But as it was impossible for the Prince of Sweden to

disguise his motive for evading a cordial co-operation in Napoleon's favourite measure, so the latter, about three months after the accession of his former companion in arms to supreme power, grew impatient enough to overwhelm the Swedish minister, Baron Lagerbjelke, with a tirade similar to his celebrated attack on Lord Whitworth. He discoursed with the utmost volubility for an hour and a quarter, leaving the astonished ambassador scarce an opening to thrust in a word by way of observation, defence, or answer. « Do they believe in Sweden that I am to be so easily duped? Do they think I will be satisfied with this half state of things? Give me no sentiments! it is from facts we form our opinions. You signed the peace with me in the beginning of the year, and engaged yourself then to break off all communication with Britain; yet you retained an English agent till late in the summer, and kept the communication open by way of Gottenburg. Your small islands are so many smuggling magazines; your vessels meet the English and exchange freights. I have not slept an hour to-night on account of your affairs; yet you ought to suffer me to take repose, I have need of it. You have vessels in every port in England. You talk of the necessity of buying salt, forsooth. Is it for salt you go into the Thames?—You talk of suffer-

ing, by superseding the trade. Do you not believe that I suffer? That Germany, Bordeaux, Holland, and France suffer? But it must all be ended. You must fire on the English, and you must confiscate their merchandize, or you must have war with France. Open war, or constant friendship—this is my last word, my ultimate determination. Could they think in Sweden that I would modify my system, because I love and esteem the Prince Royal? Did I not love and esteem the King of Holland? He is my brother, yet I have broken with him: I have silenced the voice of nature to give ear to that of the general interest.» These, and many violent expressions to the same purpose, Buonaparte poured out in an elevation of voice that might be heard in the adjoining apartments.

The Emperor's remonstrances, transmitted by the ambassador, were seconded at the Court of Stockholm by the arguments of Denmark and Russia; and the Crown Prince was at last obliged to give the national adherence of Sweden to the Continental System, and to declare war against England. The British government were fully sensible of the constraint under which Sweden acted, and, so far from acting hostilely towards that kingdom, did not seem to make any perceptible change in the

relations which had before subsisted between the countries.

In the mean time, Bernadotte and Napoleon, for a time, veiled under the usual forms of courtesy their mutual dislike and resentment. But the Crown Prince could not forgive the Emperor for an attempt to lord it over him like a superior over a vassal, and compelling him, notwithstanding his entreaties, to distress his subjects, and to render his government unpopular, by sacrificing a lucrative trade. Napoleon, on the other hand, was incensed that Bernadotte, whose greatness he considered as existing only by his own permission, should affect to differ in opinion from him, or hesitate betwixt obliging France and injuring Sweden.

On other occasional differences betwixt the sovereigns, it appeared that there was no eager desire on the part of the Crown Prince of Sweden to oblige the Emperor of France. Repeated demands for sailors and soldiers to be engaged in the French service, were made by Napoleon. These Bernadotte always contrived to evade, by referring to the laws of Sweden, as a limited monarchy, which did not permit him, like the absolute Majesty of Denmark, to dispose of her sailors at pleasure; and by enlarging on the nature of the Swedes, who, bold and willing soldiers at home, were

too much attached to their own climate and manners, to endure those of any other country. In these, and such like excuses, no one could read, more readily than Napoleon, a fixed resolution on the part of his old companion in arms, not to yield to the influence of France in any point in which he could avoid it. And though an outward show of friendship was maintained between the countries, and even between the sovereigns, yet it was of that insincere kind which was sure to be broken off on the slightest collision of their mutual interests.* It remained, however, undisturbed till the eventful year of 1812.—We return to the affairs of France.

The Emperor undertook a tour through the provinces of Flanders and Holland, with his young Empress, with the view of enforcing his views and purposes in church and state. In the course of this journey, one or two remarkable circumstances took place. The first was his furious reproaches to the clergy of Brabant, who, more rigorous papists than in some other catholic countries, had circulated among their congregations the bull of excommunication fulminated by the Pope against Napoleon. The provocation was certainly considerable, but the mode of presenting it was indecently violent. He was especially angry that they appeared without their canonical

dresses. « You call yourselves priests, » he said; « where are your vestments? Are you attorneys, notaries, or peasants? You begin by forgetting the respect due to me; whereas, the principle of the christian church, as these gentlemen (turning to the protestant deputies) can teach you, is, as they have just professed, to render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's. But you—you will not pray for your sovereign, because a Romish priest excommunicated me. But who gave him such a right? Perhaps it is your wish to bring back tortures and scaffolds, but I will take care to baffle you. I bear the temporal sword, and know how to use it. I am a monarch of God's creation, and you reptiles of the earth dare not oppose me. I render an account of my government to none save God and Jesus Christ. Do you think I am one formed to kiss the Pope's slipper? Had you the power, you would shave my head, clap a cowl on me, and plunge me in a cloister. But if you preach not the Gospel as the Apostles did, I will banish you from the empire, and disperse you like so many Jews. —And, Monsieur le Préfet, see that these men swear to the Concordat; and take care that the orthodox Gospel be taught in the ecclesiastical seminaries, that they may send out men of sense, and not idiots like these. » Thus closed this edifying admonition.

The Dutch were under the necessity of assuming the appearance of great rejoicing; yet even the danger of indulging their blunt humour could not altogether restrain these downright merchants. When the Emperor made a stir about establishing a Chamber of Commerce at Amsterdam, one of the Burgomasters gravely observed, there was no need of a chamber, since a closet would hold all the commerce left them. In like manner, when Napoleon was vaunting that he would soon have a fleet of two hundred sail; « And when you have got them,» said a plain-spoken citizen, «the English will have double the number.»

But, more formidable than blunt truths and indifferent jests, there appeared, while Buonaparte was in Holland, one of those stern invocations exciting the people against foreign tyranny, which have often occasioned the downfall of unjust power, and always rendered those who possess it unhappy and insecure. «People of Holland,» said this singular paper (which may be compared to the tract called Killing no Murder, which drove sleep from Cromwell's pillow), «why do you fear your oppressor?—he is one, you are many. Appeal to his very soldiers; their desertions in Spain show how they hate him; and even his generals would abandon him, could they

secure their own rank and grandeur independent of his. But above all, arise to the task of your own redemption; rise in the fulness of national strength. A general revolt of the Continent will ensue; the oppressor will fall, and your triumph will be a warning to tyrants, and an example to the world.»

This address produced no perceptible effect at the time, but, with other papers of the kind, it made a profound impression on the public mind.

On his return to Paris, Napoleon set himself still farther to impose the extension of the Continental System, which he was induced to attempt by the appropriation of Holland, and the revolution in Sweden. Holding his plan as much more decisive than it could have been even if his power and his spleen had been adequate to effect his purpose, he cast his eyes in every direction, to close every aperture, however small, through which British commerce, the victim he hoped entirely to smother, might draw ever so slight a gasp of breath.

It was a feature of Buonaparte's ambition—as indeed it is of inordinate ambition in general—that whatever additions were made to his empire extended his wish of acquisition. Holland, whose traders were princes, and she herself the Queen of Commerce, had been

already devoured, with her ample sea-coast and far-famed harbours. But other cities, less wealthy and famed, yet still venerable from their ancient importance, must become a part of France, ere Buonaparte thought his blockade against British commerce complete and impervious.

The seizure of the poor regions called the Valois, which had hitherto been suffered to exist as a free republic, gave France the absolute command of the road over the Simplon; the property, and perhaps the command of which passage, it being the great means of communication betwixt France and Italy, Napoleon did not incline should remain with a petty republic. It was a sufficient reason, at this unhappy period, for depriving any country of its independence, that France was to be benefited by the change. It was not in this case a bloodless one. The poor mountaineers drew to arms, and it required some fighting before they were compelled to submission, and their barren mountains were annexed to France.

But it was of much greater importance, in Napoleon's eye, to prevent the commerce which he had expelled from Holland from shifting its residence to the trading towns of the north of Germany, composing what was called the Hanseatic League. A new appropria-

tion of territory, therefore, united to France the whole sea-coast along the German Ocean, comprehending the mouths of the Scheldt, the Meuse, and the Rhine; the Ems, the Weser, and the Elbe. And it was the Emperor's proposal to unite these maritime territories to France by a canal, which was to join the Baltic Ocean to the Seine. A considerable proportion of the kingdom of Westphalia, and of the Grand Duchy of Berg, both principalities of Napoleon's own creation, fell under this appropriation, and formed another example, had not that of Holland been sufficient, to show how little respect Napoleon was disposed to pay even to those rights which emanated from himself, when they interfered with fresher plans and wider prospects of ambition.

Had Prussia retained her ancient influence as protector of the North, Hamburgh, Bremen, and Lubeck, would not have been thus unceremoniously melted down and confounded with the French Empire. But while these venerable and well-known free cities sunk without protection or resistance under a despotism which threatened to become universal, a petty state of far less consequence, scarce known as having an independent existence by any who was not intimate with the divisions of the North of Germany, found a patron, and a powerful one. This was Oldenburg, a duke-

dom, the present prince of which was related to the Emperor of Russia, as both were descended of the house of Holstein Gottorp, and was, moreover, Alexander's brother-in-law. This state of Oldenburg had been studiously excepted from the changes made in the North of Germany, after the treaty of Tilsit, which made the present confiscation of its territory an act of more marked slight towards the court of Russia. A formal expostulation being transmitted to Napoleon, he proposed to repair the injury of the Duke of Oldenburg, by assigning to him the town and territory of Erfurt, with the lordship of Blankenheim. But the duke felt himself too strongly supported to be under the necessity of surrendering his dominions, and receiving others in exchange. The offer of indemnity was haughtily rejected; France persevered in her purpose of usurping Oldenburg; and the Emperor Alexander, in a protest, gravely but temperately worded, a copy of which was delivered to every member of the diplomatic body, intimated that he did not acquiesce in the injury done to a prince of his family, although he continued to adhere to that great line of political interest which had occasioned the alliance between France and Russia.

The real truth was, that Napoleon, secure of the friendship of Austria by the late alliance,

had not, it would seem, regarded Russia as any longer worthy of the same observance which he had originally found it politic to pay to the Emperor Alexander. The Czar himself felt this; and the very large proportion of his subjects composing the party of Old Russians, as they termed themselves, who were favourable to the English alliance, and detested the connexion with France, improved the opportunity by pointing out the evils which all classes in the country endured, from the Czar's having, in complaisance to the plans of Napoleon, decreed the abolition of English commerce. They showed that this compliance with the views of France had been attended with great detriment to his own subjects, who could neither sell their commodities, and the produce of their estates, for which Britain always offered a market, nor acquire the colonial produce and British manufactured goods, which the consumption of Russia almost peremptorily demanded.

An ukase was issued on the 31st of December, 1810, which was drawn up with considerable art; for while in words it seemed to affirm the exclusion of British manufactures from the empire in general, it permitted importations to be made at Archangel, Petersburgh, Riga, Revel, and five or six other seaports, where various articles of merchandize, and, in

particular, colonial produce, unless proved to belong to Britain, might be freely imported. So that, while appearing to quote and respect the Continental System, Napoleon could not but be sensible that Russia virtually renounced it. But as Alexander had not ventured to avail himself of the seizure of Oldenburg as a reason for breaking off his alliance with France, so Napoleon, on his part, though the changed tone of Russian policy could not escape him, paused, nevertheless, in coming to a final rupture with an enemy so powerful, upon the subject of the ukase of December, 1810.

Meantime the French Emperor became probably sensible that peace with England was the surest ground upon which he could secure his throne. In the month of April, 1810, some attempt at obtaining terms of pacification had been made during the mission of Mr Mackenzie, who was sent to Morlaix as agent on the part of the British government. It had been not the least cruel peculiarity of this inveterate war, that no cartel for exchange of prisoners had been effected on either side, and of course that those unhappy persons whom chance had thrown into the power of the enemy, had no visible alternative but to linger out their lives in a distant and hostile country, or at least remain captives till the conclusion of hostilities,

to which no one could presume to assign a date. The original impediment to such an exchange, which has in all civilized countries been considered as a debt indispensably due to soften the rigours of war, and lessen the sufferings of its victims, was a demand of Napoleon, that the persons possessing no military character, whom he had made prisoners contrary to the law of nations at the commencement of hostilities, should be exchanged against French sailors and soldiers. The British ministers for a long time resisted so unusual an application, to which policy, indeed, forbade them to accede. At length, however, the sufferings of individuals, and of their families, induced the British government to allow the French Emperor the advantage of his oppressive act in detaining these unfortunate persons, and agree that they should be included in the proposed cartel. But when the commissioners met at Morlaix, Mr Mackenzie found himself as far from approaching an agreement as ever. The number of French prisoners in Britain was more by many thousands than that of the British in France; and Buonaparte, who seldom made a bargain in which he did not secure the advantage to himself, insisted that the surplus of French prisoners should be exchanged for Germans,

Spaniards, Portuguese, or others who should be captive in France.

This was readily agreed to, so far as regarded foreign troops in British pay; but it was equally unreasonable and contrary to usage to require that we should restore to France her native subjects, whose services she might use to augment her military force, while we received in exchange foreigners, unconnected with us by service or allegiance, and who, perhaps, when set at liberty, might be as apt to join the French ranks, as those of the nation in whose name they had obtained freedom.

After much wrangling and dispute, Mr Mackenzie, to show the sincere desire which the British government entertained of releasing the prisoners on both sides, made a proposal that the exchange should commence by liberating as many French prisoners as could be balanced by British captives in the French prisons; that after this, captives of every nation should be exchanged indifferently on both sides; and whatever number of prisoners might remain on either side, after the general balance had been struck, should also be set at liberty, upon an engagement not to serve till regularly exchanged. To this proposal—a more liberal one could hardly be made—the French only answered by starting new demands, and making new objections. Among

these, perhaps, it will scarcely be believed, that Moustier, the French commissioner, had the modesty to propose that Lord Wellington and his army, lying in the lines at Torres Vedras, should be reckoned as French prisoners in the proposed cartel! Mr Mackenzie answered with becoming spirit, that he would neither be the medium through which his government should be insulted by such a proposal, nor would he proceed in the negotiation until this impertinence were atoned for.

It is needless to proceed farther in the elusory detail of a treaty, which Napoleon had previously determined should be brought to no useful issue. He had calculated which country could best support the absence of their prisoners, or rather to whom their services were of most consequence. He felt that he himself, by the conscription, as well as by the auxiliary troops which he could summon at pleasure from his neighbours or dependents, could always command a sufficiency of men even for his gigantic undertakings; while to Britain, whose soldiers could only be obtained by a high bounty, the deliverance of her prisoners was proportionally more valuable. Whatever was his view in establishing the negotiation, which was probably only to satisfy the French army, by evincing a seeming interest in the unfortunate portion of their bre-

thren in arms who were immured in English prisons, they gave way to the consideration, that while things remained as they were, Britain suffered more in proportion than France.

Some proposals for a general peace had been made during the conferences at Morlaix; and the British government had stated three different* principles, any of which they expressed themselves willing to admit as a basis. These were, first, the state of possession before the war; or, secondly, the present state of possession; or, thirdly, a plan of reciprocal compensations. But none of these principles suited the French government to act upon; so that the treaty for a general peace, and that for restoring, taking into calculation the prisoners on both sides, upwards of a hundred thousand human beings to liberty, their country, and their home, proved both of them altogether nugatory.

The note of defiance was therefore resumed, so soon as it had been ascertained that Britain would reject any terms of peace which were not founded on equal and liberal principles. An oration of Count Sémonville demonstrated that it was all owing to the persevering ambition of England that Buonaparte had been obliged to possess himself of the sea-coast of Europe—that all his encroachments on the land were the necessary consequences of her em-

pire of the seas. He then demanded, in prophetic fury, to know what in future would be the bounds of possibility. « It is the part of England, » he said, « to reply. Let her turn her eyes on the past, and learn to judge from thence the events of the future. France and Napoleon will never change. »

CHAPTER V.

View of Napoleon's gigantic Power at the present period. —The Empress Maria Louisa delivered of a Son—Criticism on the Title given him, of King of Rome—Speculations in regard to the advantages or disadvantages arising from this Event.—Retrospect.—Ex-Queen of Etruria—Her severe and unjustifiable Treatment by Napoleon.—Lucien Buonaparte is invited to England, where he writes Epic Poetry.—Attempt to deliver Ferdinand, defeated.—His pusillanimity.—Operations in Portugal.—Retreat of Masséna—View of his conduct, as a Man and as a General.—Skill displayed on both Sides.—Battles of Fuentes d'Onoro fought by Lord Wellington—On the South Frontier of Portugal, by Lord Beresford—Of Barossa, by General Graham—In all of which the English are victorious.—Enterprise of Arroyo-Molinas.—Spaniards defeated under Blake—Valencia captured by the French, and he and his Army made Prisoners of War.—Disunion among the French Generals.—Joseph writes to Napoleon, wishing to abdicate the Throne of Spain.

The natural consequences of an overgrown empire were already sapping that of Napoleon; for extent of territory does not constitute power, any more than corpulence in the human frame constitutes strength or health; and Na-

poleon's real authority was in truth greater some years before, than now when his dominion was so much enlarged. The war in Spain, maintained at such an expense of blood and treasure, was a wasting and consuming sore. The kingdom of Holland had afforded him supplies more readily, and had more the means of doing so, when under the dominion of his brother Louis, than the Dutch now either showed or possessed, when ranked as a constituent part of the French empire. The same might be said of the states and free towns in the north of Germany, where, in many instances, strong bands of smugglers, dressed and armed as guerilla parties, maintained a desultory war with the officers of the French customs; and, moved equally by national hatred and the love of gain, won by desperate risks, made in some districts a kind of petty civil war. Yet though such canker-worms gnawed the root of the tree, the branches and foliage, to all outward appearance, extended a broader shade than ever. It was especially when a formal annunciation, both in France and Austria, called the good subjects of both realms to rejoice in the prospect that Maria Louisa would soon give an heir to Napoleon, that men who opened the map of Europe saw with fear and wonder the tremendous inheritance to which the expected infant was likely to succeed.

The actual dominions of France, governed by Napoleon in his own proper right as Emperor of France and King of Italy, had gradually attained the following extravagant dimensions. They extended from Travemunde, on the Baltic Ocean, to the foot of the Pyrenees, measuring from north-east to south-west; and from Dunkirk to Terracina, on the confines of the Neapolitan territories, measuring from north to south. A population of forty-two millions of people, fitted in various ways to secure the prosperity of a state, and inhabiting, for wealth, richness of soil, and felicity of climate, by far the finest portion of the civilized earth, formed the immediate liege subjects of this magnificent empire.

Yet to stop here were greatly to undervalue the extent of Napoleon's power. We have to add to his personal empire, Lombardy, the Illyrian provinces, Istria, Dalmatia, and Albania. Then, in his character of Mediator of the Helvetian Republic, the Emperor exercised an almost absolute authority in Switzerland, which furnished him, though unwillingly, with several fine regiments of auxiliaries. The German Confederation of the Rhine, though numbering kings among their league, were at the slightest hint bound to supply him each with his prescribed quota of forces, with a readiness and an affectation of zeal very different from the slack and reluc-

tant manner in which they formerly supplied their paltry contingents to the Emperor of Germany.

Murat, with his kingdom of Naples, was at his brother-in-law's disposal; and if, as Buonaparte's hopes whispered, the Peninsula should ultimately prove unable to resist the war he waged, then Spain and Portugal would be added to his immense empire, being now in the state of sturdy and contumacious rebels, whose resistance seemed in the speedy prospect of being finally subdued. Thus at least three-fourths, but rather a considerably larger proportion of the civilized world, were either in quiet subjection to Napoleon's sceptre, or on the point, as was supposed, of being so.

Of those who shared amongst them the residue of Europe, and still maintained some claim to independence, Britain might make the proud boast, that she was diametrically in opposition to this Ruler of the world; that, in the long-continued strife, she had dealt him injuries as deep as she had ever received, and had disdained, under any circumstances, to treat with him on less terms than those of equality. Not to that fair land be the praise, though she supported many burdens and endured great losses; but to Providence, who favoured her efforts and strengthened her resolutions; who gave her power to uphold her own good cause, which, in truth, was that of

European independence, and courage to trust in the justice of Heaven, when the odds mustered against her seemed, in earthly calculation, so dreadful as to deprive the wise of the head to counsel; the brave of the heart to resist!

Denmark, so powerful was the voice which France had in her councils, might almost be accounted humbled to one of the federative principalities.

Sweden had but a moderate and second-rate degree of power. She felt, as other German nations, the withering blight of the Continental or Anti-social System; but, circumstanced as she was, with the possession of Swedish Pomerania dependent on French pleasure, she had no other remedy than to wait her opportunity.

Still more was this the case with Prussia, through all her provinces the mortal enemy of the French name, but whom the large garrisons which France had planted in her dominions, and the numerous forces which she maintained there, compelled for the time to be as submissive as a handmaiden. That the court were, as noiselessly as possible, endeavouring to revive their military establishment; that they were dismissing the villains who had sold and betrayed their country, and replacing them by age which had been tried, or youth which had witnessed the agony of their

country, and been trained up in thinking, that to avenge her was their dearest duty, was true. True it was, also, that the people in Prussia, and many other parts of Germany, waited, as for the day dawning, for the hope of winning back their freedom; but outward appearances indicated nothing of these smothered hopes, wishes, and preparations; and the general eye saw in Prussia only a nation resigned to her bondage, without, apparently, any hope of redemption.

Austria, besides the terrible losses which the last war had brought upon her, was now fettered to Napoleon by a link which gave the proud house of Hapsburg an apology for the submission, or at least the observance, which she paid to the son-in-law of her Emperor.

Turkey, though she would have had her turn, had the tide of fortune continued to keep the course in which it had so long flowed, was not yet in the way of being comprehended in Napoleon's plan of politics.

Russia was waging with the Porte an impolitic war of acquisition, to realize some of the selfish plans of aggrandizement which Napoleon had assented to, or perhaps suggested, at Tilsit and Erfurt. But he now witnessed them without wishing them success, and listened to the complaints of Austria, who unwillingly saw the ambitious views of Russia in these provinces. Of all the continental states,

therefore, assuming even the semblance of independence, Russia seemed alone to possess it in reality; and from late acts of estrangement, such as the protest on the subject of the Duchy of Oldenburg, and the reception of British ships and merchandize into her ports, it certainly appeared that a different spirit was in the councils of this great empire than had ruled them during the meetings at Tilsit and Erfurt. Yet there were but few who thought that Russia, in opposition to the whole continent of Europe, would dare confront Napoleon; and still fewer, even of the most sanguine politicians, had any deep-grounded hope that her opposition would be effectual. Out of such a Cimmerian midnight, to all human views, was the day-spring of European liberty destined to arise.

America, happy in the Atlantic which severed her from Europe, now an almost universal scene of war or slavery, looked on in conscious security, and, by reviving at this crisis disputed claims upon Britain, seemed to listen more to the recollection of recent enmity, than of mutual language, manners, and descent.

Within a year after her marriage with Napoleon, the young Empress was announced to have been taken with the pains of labour. The case was a difficult and distressing one; and the professional person employed lost

courage, and was afraid to do what was necessary. Napoleon appeared in the apartment, and commanded him to proceed as if the patient were the wife of an ordinary burgess. She was at length successfully and safely delivered of a fine boy, which Buonaparte, with feelings, doubtless, as highly strung as after a battle gained, carried into the next apartment, and exhibited in triumph to the great officers and courtiers, by whom he was unanimously hailed King of Rome, the dignity which had been destined to the heir of the French Republic.

The title did not, indeed, pass uncriticised. Some said, that taking the regal designation from a city where the very name of king had been accounted unlucky, had an ominous presage. Catholics objected to it, as it necessarily carried with it the recollection of the sacrilegious violence which had stripped the Pope of his temporal possessions. And lastly, it was asked what chance there ever was of the execution of that part of the Italian constitution, which, after Napoleon's death, guaranteed the succession in the kingdom of Italy to some one different from the Emperor of France, when the title of King of Rome was assumed as that of the heir of the French empire?[1]

[1] Jests, as well as serious observations, were made on this occasion. « Have you any commands for France? »

Such ominous remarks, however, only circulated among the disaffected, or passed with anti-imperial jests, satires, and calembourgs, through such saloons of the Faubourg St Germain, as were still tenanted by the ancient and faithful adherents of the house of Bourbon. The city of Paris made as general a show of rejoicing as they ever testified when an heir was born to one of their most beloved sovereigns; deputations with addresses came from public bodies of every description; and, that flattery might sound the very base string of humility, the fashionable colour of dress for the season bore a name alluding to the young King of Rome, which delicacy, if not pride, ought to have rejected. But, perhaps, the strangest circumstance of the whole was, that the old dethroned King of Spain, and his consort, undertook a journey, for the purpose of carrying their personal congratulations on the birth of an heir, to one who had deposed, and was detaining in prison their own lineage, and

said a Frenchman at Naples to an English friend; « I shall be there in two days.» « In France?» answered his friend, « I thought you were setting off for Rome.» « True; but Rome, by a decree of the Emperor, is now indissolubly united to France.» « I have no news to burthen you with,» said his friend; « but can I do any thing for you in England? I shall be there in half an hour.» « In England?» said the Frenchman, « and in half an hour!» « Yes,» said his friend, « within that time I shall be at sea, and the sea has been indissolubly united to the British empire.»

had laid Spain, their native dominions, in blood, from the Pyrenees to the Pillars of Hercules.

Napoleon, and his more devoted admirers, rejoiced in this happy incident, as that which was most likely, in their eyes, to sustain the Empire of France, when fate should remove him by whom it was founded. The protection of the house of Austria, and the charm flung around the child by the high fame of the father, could not, it was thought, but insure a peaceful accession to the throne, and an undisturbed security in possessing it. His life, too, was insured in future against such fanatics as that of Schœnbrun; for what purpose would it serve to cut off the Emperor, when the empire was to survive, and descend in all its strength upon his son and heir?

Others there were, who pretended that the advantages arising from the birth of the King of Rome were balanced by corresponding inconveniences. These asserted, that several of the French great generals had followed the fortunes of Napoleon, in hopes that, upon his death in battle, or upon his natural decease, they, or some of them, might, like the successors of Alexander the Great, share amongst them the ample succession of kingdoms and principalities which were likely to become the property of the strongest and bravest, in the lottery which might be expected to take place

on the death of the great favourite of Fortune. These great soldiers, it was surmised, being cut short of this fair prospect, would no longer have the same motives for serving the living Napoleon, whose inheritance at his death was now to descend, like the patrimony of a peasant or burgess, in the regular and lawful line of inheritance. But the politicians who argued thus did not sufficiently regard the pitch of superiority which Napoleon had attained over those around him; his habit of absolute command, theirs of implicit obedience; and the small likelihood there was of any one who served under him venturing to incur his displeasure, and the risk of losing the rank and fortune which most had actually obtained, by showing any marks of coldness or dissatisfaction, on account of the disappointment of distant and visionary hopes.

There were others who augured different consequences, from the effect of the same event on the feelings of Buonaparte's enemies, both open and unavowed. It had been a general belief, and certainly was founded on probability, that the immense but ill-constructed empire which Napoleon had erected would fall to pieces, so soon as it was not kept steady and compact by the fear and admiration of his personal talents. Hence the damp cast by persons affecting a wise caution, upon the general desire to shake off the yoke of France. They enlarged upon the invincible talent, upon

the inevitable destinies of Napoleon personally; but they consoled the more impatient patriots, by counselling them to await his death, before making a daring attempt to vindicate their freedom. Such counsels were favourably listened to, because men are, in spite of themselves, always willing to listen to prudent arguments, when they tend to postpone desperate risks. But this species of argument was ended, when the inheritance of despotism seemed ready to be transmitted from father to son in direct descent. There was no termination seen to the melancholy prospect, nor was it easy for the most lukewarm of patriots to assign any longer a reason for putting off till Napoleon's death the resistance which to-day demanded. Under these various lights was the birth of the King of Rome considered; and it may after all remain a matter of doubt, whether the blessing of a son and heir, acceptable as it must necessarily have been to his domestic feelings, was politically of that advantage to him which the Emperor of France unquestionably expected.

And now, before we begin to trace the growing differences betwixt France and Russia which speedily led to such important consequences, we may briefly notice some circumstances connected with Spain and with Spanish affairs, though the two incidents which we are to mention first, are rather of a detached and insulated nature.

The first of these refers to the Ex-Queen of Etruria, a daughter, it will be remembered, of Charles, King of Spain, and a sister of Ferdinand. Upon this princess and her son Buonaparte had settled the kingdom of Etruria, or Tuscany. Preparatory to the Bayonne intrigue, he had forcibly deprived her of this dignity, in order to offer it as an indemnification to Ferdinand for the cession, which he proposed to that unhappy prince, of the inheritance of Spain. Having contrived to obtain that cession without any compensation, Buonaparte reserved Etruria to himself, and retained the late queen as a hostage. For some time she was permitted to reside with her parents at Compiégne; but afterwards, under pretext of conducting her to Parma, she was escorted to Nice, and there subjected to the severe vigilance of the police. The princess appears to have been quicker in her feelings than the greater part of her family, which does not, indeed, argue any violent degree of sensibility. Terrified, however, and alarmed at the situation in which she found herself, she endeavoured to effect an escape into England. Two gentlemen of her retinue were sent to Holland, for the purpose of arranging her flight, but her project was discovered. On the 16th April, 1811, officers of police and gendarmes broke into the residence of the queen at Nice, seized her person and papers, and,

after detaining her in custody for two months, and threatening to try her by a military tribunal, they at length intimated to her a sentence, condemning her, with her daughter (her son had been left very much indisposed at Compiégne), to be detained close prisoners in a monastery at Rome, to which she was compelled to repair within twenty-four hours after the notice of her doom. Her two agents, who had been previously made prisoners, were sent to Paris. They were condemned to death by a military commission, and were brought out for that purpose to the plain of Grénelle. One was shot on the spot, and pardon was extended to his companion when he was about to suffer the same punishment. The mental agony of the poor man had, however, affected the sources of life, and he died within a few days after the reprieve. The severity of this conduct towards a princess,—a queen indeed,—who had placed her person in Napoleon's hands, under the expectation that her liberty at least should not be abridged, was equally a breach of justice, humanity, and gentleman-like courtesy.

It is curious, that about the same time when Napoleon treated with so much cruelty a foreign and independent princess, merely because she expressed a desire to exchange her residence from France to England, his own brother Lucien was received with hospitality in that is-

land, so heartily detested, so frequently devoted to the fate of a second Carthage. Napoleon, who was always resolute in considering the princes of his own blood as the first slaves in the state, had become of late very urgent with Lucien to dismiss his wife, and unite himself with some of the royal families on the Continent, or at least to agree to bestow the hand of his daughter upon young Ferdinand of Spain, who had risen in favour by his behaviour on an occasion immediately to be mentioned. But Lucien, determined at this time not to connect himself or his family with the career of his relative's ambition, resolved to settle in America, and place the Atlantic betwixt himself and the importunities of his Imperial brother. He applied to the British minister at Sardinia for a pass, who was under the necessity of referring him to his government. On this second application, he was invited to England, where he was permitted to live in freedom upon his parole, one officer only having a superintendence of his movements and correspondence. These were in every respect blameless; and the ex-statesman, who had played so distinguished a part in the great revolutionary game, was found able to amuse himself with the composition of an epic poem on the subject of Charlemagne ;—somewhat more harmlessly than did his brother Napoleon, in endeavour-

ing again to rebuild and consolidate the vast empire of the son of Pepin.

Another intrigue of a singular character, and which terminated in an unexpected manner, originated in an attempt of the English ministry to achieve the liberty of Ferdinand, the lawful King of Spain. A royal and a popular party had begun to show themselves in that distracted country, and to divert the attention of the patriots from uniting their efforts to accomplish the object of most engrossing importance, the recovery, namely, of their country, from the intruding monarch and the French armies. The English government were naturally persuaded that Ferdinand, to whose name his subjects were so strongly attached, would be desirous and capable of placing himself, were he at liberty, at their head, putting an end to their disputès by his authority, and giving their efforts an impulse, which could be communicated by no one but the King of Spain, to the Spanish nation. It is no doubt true, that had the government of England known the real character of this prince, a wish for his deliverance from France, or his presence in Spain, would have been the last which they would have formed. This misapprehension, however, was natural, and was acted upon.

A Piedmontese, of Irish extraction, called

the Baron Kolli (or Kelly), the selected agent of the British government, was furnished with some diamonds and valuable articles, under pretext of disposing of which he was to obtain admission to the prince, then a prisoner at Valençey, where his chief amusement, it is believed, was embroidering a gown and petticoat, to be presented to the Virgin Mary. Kolli was then to have informed the prince of his errand, effected Ferdinand's escape by means of confederates among the royalist party, and conveyed him to the coast, where a small squadron awaited the event of the enterprise, designed to carry the King of Spain to Gibraltar, or whither else he chose. In March, 1810. Kolli was put ashore in Quiberon Bay, whence he went to Paris, to prepare for his enterprise. He was discovered, however, by the police, and arrested at the moment when he was setting out for Valençey. Some attempts were made to induce him to proceed with the scheme, of which his papers enabled the police to comprehend the general plan, keeping communication at the same time with the French minister. As he disdained to undertake this treacherous character, Kolli was committed close prisoner to the castle of Vincennes, while a person,—the same who betrayed his principal, and whose exterior in some degree answered the description of the

British emissary,—was sent to represent him at the castle of Valençey.

But Ferdinand, either suspicious of the snare which was laid for him, or poor-spirited enough to prefer a safe bondage to a brave risk incurred for liberty, would not listen to the supposed agent of Britain, and indeed denounced the pretended Kolli to Barthélemy, the governor of the castle. The false Kolli, therefore, returned to Paris, while the real one remained in the castle of Vincennes till the capture of Paris by the allies. Ferdinand took credit, in a letter to Buonaparte, for having resisted the temptation held out to him by the British government, who had, as he pathetically observed, abused his name, and occasioned, by doing so, the shedding of much blood in Spain. He again manifested his ardent wish to become the adopted son of the Emperor; his hope that the author and abettors of the scheme to deliver him might be brought to condign punishment; and concluded with a hint, that he was extremely desirous to leave Valençey, a residence which had nothing about it but what was unpleasant, and was not in any respect fitted for him. The hint of Ferdinand about a union with Buonaparte's family probably led to the fresh importunity on the Emperor's part, which induced Lucien to leave Italy. Ferdinand did not obtain the change of residence he desired,

nor does he seem to have profited in any way by his candour towards his keeper, excepting that he evaded the strict confinement, or yet worse fate, to which he might have been condemned, had he imprudently confided in the false Baron Kolli.

In Portugal, the great struggle betwixt Masséna and Wellington, upon which, as we formerly observed, the eyes of the world were fixed, had been finally decided in favour of the English general. This advantage was attained by no assistance of the elements,—by none of those casual occurrences which are called chances of war,—by no dubious, or even venturous risks,—by the decision of no single battle lost or won; but solely by the superiority of one great general over another, at the awful game in which neither had yet met a rival.

For more than four months, Masséna, with as fine an army as had ever left France, lay looking at the impregnable lines with which the British forces, so greatly inferior in numerical strength, were covering Lisbon, the object of his expedition. To assail in such a position troops, whose valour he had felt at Busaco, would have been throwing away the lives of his soldiers; and to retreat, was to abandon the enterprise which his master had entrusted to him, with a confidence in his skill and his good fortune, which must, in that case, have been there-

after sorely abated. Masséna tried every effort which military skill could supply, to draw his foe out of his place of advantage. He threatened to carry the war across the Tagus—he threatened to extend his army towards Oporto; but each demonstration he made had been calculated upon and anticipated by his antagonist, and was foiled almost without an effort. At length, exhausted by the want of supplies, and the interruption of his communications, after lying one month at Alenquer, Masséna retreated to Santarem, as preferable winter quarters; but, in the beginning of March, he found that these were equally untenable, and became fully sensible, that if he desired to save the remnant of a sickly and diminished army, it must necessarily be by a speedy retreat.

This celebrated movement, decisive of the fate of the campaign, commenced about the 4th of March. There are two different points in which Masséna's conduct may be regarded, and they differ as light and darkness. If it be considered in the capacity of that of a human being, the indignant reader, were we to detail the horrors which he permitted his soldiers to perpetrate, would almost deny his title to the name. It is a vulgar superstition, that when the Enemy of mankind is invoked, and appears, he destroys in his retreat the building which has witnessed the apparition. It seem-

ed as if the French, in leaving Portugal, were determined that ruins alone should remain to show they had once been there. Military license was let loose in its most odious and frightful shape, and the crimes which were committed embraced all that is horrible to humanity. But if a curtain is dropped on these horrors, and Masséna is regarded merely as a military leader, his retreat, perhaps, did him as much honour as any of the great achievements which formerly had made his name famous. If he had been rightly called Fortune's favourite, he now showed that his reputation did not depend on her smile, but could be maintained by his own talents, while she shone on other banners. In retreating through the north of Portugal, a rugged and mountainous country, he was followed by Lord Wellington, who allowed him not a moment's respite. The movements of the troops to those who understood, and had the calmness to consider them, were as regular consequences of each other, as occur in the game of chess.

The French were repeatedly seen drawn up on ground where it seemed impossible to dislodge them; and as often the bayonets of a British column, which had marched by some distant route, were observed twinkling in the direction of their flank, intimating that their line was about to be turned. But this was only the signal for Masséna to recommence his

retreat, which he did before the English troops could come up; nor did he fail again to halt where opportunity offered, until again dislodged by his sagacious and persevering pursuer. At length, the French were fairly driven out of the Portuguese territory, excepting the garrison in the frontier town of Almeida, of which Lord Wellington formed first the blockade, and afterwards the siege.

So soon as he escaped from the limits of Portugal, Masséna hastened to draw together such reinforcements as he could obtain in Castile, collected once more a large force, and, within about a fortnight after he had effected his retreat, resumed the offensive, with the view of relieving Almeida, which was the sole trophy remaining to show his triumphant advance in the preceding season. Lord Wellington did not refuse the battle, which took place on the 5th of May, near Fuentes d'Onoro. The conflict was well disputed, but the French general sustained a defeat, notwithstanding his superiority of numbers, and particularly of cavalry. He then retreated from the Portuguese frontier, having previously sent orders for the evacuation of Almeida by the garrison, which the French commandant executed with much dexterity.

On the more southern frontier of Portugal, Lord Beresford fought also a dreadful and sanguinary battle. The action was in some

measure indecisive, but Soult, who commanded the French, failed in obtaining such a success as enabled him to accomplish his object, which was the raising of the siege of Badajos. In Portugal, therefore, and along its frontiers, the British had been uniformly successful, and their countrymen at home began once more to open their ears to the suggestions of hope and courage.

Cadiz, also, the remaining bulwark of the patriots, had been witness to a splendid action. General Graham, with a body of British troops, had sallied out from the garrison in March, 1811, and obtained a victory upon the heights of Barossa, which, had he been properly seconded by the Spanish General Lapena, would have been productive of a serious influence upon the events of the siege; and which, even though it remained imperfect, gave heart and confidence to the besieged, and struck a perpetual damp into the besiegers, who found themselves bearded in their own position. There had been much fighting through Spain with various results. But if we dare venture to use such an emblem, the bush, though burning, was not consumed; and Spain continued that sort of general resistance which seemed to begin after all usual means of regular opposition had failed, as Nature often musters her strength to combat a disease

which the medical assistants have pronounced mortal.

Catalonia, though her strong-holds were lost, continued, under the command of De Lacy and d'Eroles, to gain occasional advantages over the enemy; and Spain saw Figueras, one of her strongest fortresses, recovered by the bold stratagem of Rovira, a doctor of divinity, and commander of a guerilla party. Being instantly besieged by the French, and ill supplied with provisions, the place was indeed speedily regained; but the possibility of its being taken was, to the peculiarly tenacious spirit of the Spaniards, more encouraging than its recapture was matter of dismay.

But chiefly the auxiliary British, with the Portuguese, who, trained by the care of Lord Beresford, were fit to sustain their part in line by the side of their allies, showed that they were conducted in a different spirit from that which made their leaders in former expeditions stand with one foot on sea and one on land, never venturing from the sight of the ocean, as if they led amphibious creatures, who required the use of both elements to secure their existence; and the scheme of whose campaign was to rout and repel, as they best could, the attacks of the enemy, but seldom to venture upon anticipating or disconcerting his plans. To protect Galicia, for example, when

invaded by the French, Lord Wellington, though with a much inferior army than he was well aware could be brought against him, formed the blockade of Ciudad Rodrigo; thus compelling the enemy to desist from their proposed attempt on that province, and to concentrate their forces for the relief of that important place. Such a concentration could not, in the condition of the French armies, be effected without much disadvantage. It afforded breathing space for all the guerillas, and an opportunity which they never neglected, of acting with their usual courage and sagacity against small parties and convoys of the French, as well as that of seizing upon any posts which the enemy might have been obliged to leave imperfectly defended. And when the French had collected their whole force to overwhelm the British general and his forces, Marmont had the mortification to see the former withdraw from the presence of a superior enemy, with as much calmness and security as if marching through a peaceful country.

Nothing remained for the French general, save to detail in the pages of the *Moniteur*, what must have been the fate of the English but for their hasty and precipitate flight, when the well-concerted and boldly-executed enterprise of Arroyo-Molinos, convinced him to his cost that a retreat was no rout. In this village upwards of 1400 French were taken prisoners,

at a moment when they least expected to be attacked. This little action showed a spirit of hazard, a disposition to assume the offensive, which the French did not expect from the British forces; and they were, for the first time, foiled in their own military qualities of vigilance, enterprise, and activity. In Britain, also, the nation perceived that their army showed the same courage and the same superiority, which had been considered as the exclusive property of their gallant sailors. The French were defeated under the rock of Gibraltar by the Spanish General Ballasteros, and their general, Godinot, blew out his own brains, rather than face the account, to which Soult, his commander-in-chief, was about to summon him. Tarifa, in the same quarter, was defended successfully by a garrison of mingled Spaniards and British, and the French were computed to have lost before it about two thousand five hundred men.

On the other hand, the French discipline continued to render them superior over the patriots, wherever the latter could be brought to face them in any thing resembling a pitched battle. Thus Blake, after a gallant action, was totally defeated near Murviedro, and that town itself fell into possession of the enemy. A more severe consequence of the battle of Ocana, as that disastrous action was termed, was the capture of Valencia, where Blake, and

the remainder of his army, were made prisoners of war.

But amid those vicissitudes of good or bad fortune, Spain continued to Buonaparte the same harassing and exhausting undertaking, which it had been almost from the commencement. Sickness and want made more ravages amongst the French troops than the sword of the enemy, though that did not lie idle. Many of the districts are unhealthy to strangers; but of these, as well as others, it was necessary for the invaders to retain possession. There, while numerous deaths happened among the troops, the guerillas watched the remnant, until sickness and fatigue had reduced the garrisons to a number insufficient for defence, and then pounced upon them like birds of prey on a fallen animal, upon whom they have been long in attendance.

Besides, disunion continued to reign among the French generals. Joseph, although in point of power the very shadow of what a king ought to be, had spirit enough to resent the condition in which he was placed amid the haughty military chiefs, who acknowledged no superior beside the Emperor, and listened to no commands save those emanating from Paris. He wrote to his brother a letter, accompanying a formal abdication of the throne of Spain, unless he was to be placed in more complete authority than even the orders of Napoleon him-

self had hitherto enabled him to attain. But the prospect of a Northern war approaching nearer and nearer, Napoleon was induced to postpone his brother's request, although so pressingly urged, and Spain was in some measure left to its fate during the still more urgent events of the Russian campaign.

CHAPTER VI.

Retrospect of the Causes leading to the Rupture with Russia—Originate in the Treaty of Tilsit.—Russia's alleged Reasons of Complaint.—Arguments of Napoleon's Councillors against War with Russia.—Fouché is against the War—Presents a Memorial to Napoleon upon the Subject—His Answer.—Napoleon's Views in favour of the War, as urged to his various Advisers.

We are now approaching the verge of that fated year, when Fortune, hitherto unwearied in her partiality towards Napoleon, turned first upon himself, personally, a clouded and stormy aspect. Losses he had sustained both by land and sea, but he could still remark, as when he first heard of the defeat at Trafalgar,—« I was not there—I could not be everywhere at once.» But he was soon to experience misfortunes, to the narrative of which he could not apply this proud commentary. The reader must be first put in remembrance of the causes of the incipient quarrel betwixt the empire of France and that of Russia.

Notwithstanding the subsequent personal

intimacy which took place betwixt the two sovereigns, and which for five years prevented the springing up of any enmity betwixt Alexander and Napoleon, the seeds of that quarrel were, nevertheless, to be found in the treaty of pacification of Tilsit itself. Russia, lying remote from aggression in every other part of her immense territory, is open to injury on that important western frontier by which she is united with Europe, and in those possessions by virtue of which she claims to be a member of the European republic. The partition of Poland, unjust as it was in every point of view, was a measure of far greater importance to Russia than either to Austria or Prussia; for, while that state possessed its former semi-barbarous and stormy independence, it lay interposed in a great measure betwixt Russia and the rest of Europe, or, in other words, betwixt her and the civilized world. Any revolution which might restore Poland to the independence, for which the inhabitants had not ceased to sigh, would have effectually thrust the Czar back upon his forests, destroyed his interest and influence in European affairs, and reduced him comparatively to the rank of an Asiatic sovereign. This liberation of their country, and the reunion of its dismembered provinces under a national constitution, was what the Poles expected from Buonaparte. For this they crowded to his standard after the

battle of Jena; and although he was too cautious to promise any thing explicitly concerning the restoration of Poland to its rank among nations, yet most of his measures indicated a future purpose of accomplishing that work. Thus, when those Polish provinces which had fallen to the portion of Prussia, were formed into the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, as an independent principality, and the sovereignty was conferred, not without a secret meaning, on the King of Saxony, a descendant of the ancient monarchs of Poland, what could this be supposed to indicate, save the commencement of an independent state, to which might be added, as opportunity occurred, the remainig districts of Poland which had been seized-upon by Austria and Russia? « To what purpose, » asked those statesmen, who belonged to the old Russian or Anti-Gallican party in the empire, « are those stipulations for a free military road and passage of troops from Saxony, to Warsaw and its territory, through Silesia, if it is not that France may preserve the means of throwing an overpowering force into the Duchy, so soon as it shall be her pleasure to undo the work of the sage Catherine, by depriving Russia of those rich Polish provinces, which her policy had added to the empire? Wherefore, » asked the same persons, « should there have been a special article in the same treaty of Tilsit, that France should retain Dantzic until a maritime

peace, unless it was to serve as a place of arms in the event of a new war with Russia, the probability of which Napoleon, therefore, must certainly have calculated upon, even at the very moment when he cultivated such close personal intimacy with the Emperor Alexander?»

These suspicions were considerably increased by the articles of peace concluded with Austria at Schœnbrun. By that treaty all Western Galicia, together with the city of Cracow, and other territories, were disjoined from Austria, and added to the dukedom of Warsaw, marking, it was supposed, still farther the intention of Napoleon, at one time or another, to restore in its integrity the ancient kingdom of Poland, of which Russia alone now held the full share allotted to her by the partition treaties.

Other causes led to the same conclusion. The old Russians, a numerous and strong party in the empire, which comprehended the greater part of the large landholders, felt, as they had done under the Emperor Paul, much distress, national and personal, from the interruption of the British trade by Buonaparte's Continental System. Their timber, their pitch, their potash, their hemp, and other bulky and weighty commodities, the chief produce of their estates, for which the British had been ready customers, remained on their hands, while they were deprived of the colonial produce and manufactures of Britain, which they were wont to

receive in exchange for those articles, with mutual profit and convenience to both parties. It was in vain that, to reconcile them to this state of interdiction, they saw in the speeches and decrees of Buonaparte, tirades about the freedom of the seas, and the maritime tyranny of England. It seemed an ill-omened species of liberation, which began by the destruction of their commerce and impoverishment of their estates; and the Russian Boyards could no more comprehend the declamation of Buonaparte against the English, than the millers of the Ebro could be made to understand the denunciation of Don Quixote against their customers. These magnates only saw that the Ruler of France wished them to submit to great commercial distress and inconvenience, in order to accelerate his plan of ruining Great Britain, after which achievement he might find it a more easy undertaking to destroy their own natural importance as a European power, by re-establishing Poland, and resuming the fertile provinces on the western boundary; thus leading the Russian cabinet, if the French interest should remain paramount there, by a very disadvantageous road to a still more disastrous conclusion.

There was, besides, spread though the Russian nation generally, a sense that France was treating their Emperor rather on the footing of an inferior. It is a thing entirely unknown

in diplomacy, that one government should pretend a right to dictate to another who is upon terms of equality, the conditions on which she should conduct her commerce; and the assuming such a right, seconded by threatening language in case of non-compliance, has been always held a legitimate cause of war. Indeed, the opinion that the French league disgraced the Russian nation, plunged their country into embarrassments, and was likely to occasion still farther misfortunes to them, became so general, that the Emperor must have paid some attention to the wishes of his people, even if his own friendship with Buonaparte had not been cooled by late occurrences.

The alliance with Austria was of a character calculated to alarm Alexander. Russia and Austria, though they had a common interest to withstand the overpowering strength of Buonaparte, had been in ordinary times always rivals, and sometimes enemies. It was the interference of Austria, which, upon several occasions, checked the progress of the Russians in Turkey, and it was Austria also which formed a barrier against the increase of their power in the south of Europe. The family connexion, therefore, formed by Buonaparte with the house of Hapsburg, made him still more formidable to Russia, as likely to embrace the quarrels and forward the pretensions of

that power against the Czar, even if France herself should have none to discuss with him.

But there was no need to have recourse to remote causes of suspicion. Russia had, and must always have had, direct and immediate cause of jealousy, while France or her Emperor claimed the permanent right of thinking and deciding for her, as well as other nations, in the relations of commerce and others, in which every independent state is most desirous of exercising the right of deliberating for herself. This was the true state of the case. To remain the ally of Buonaparte, Alexander must have become his vassal; to attempt to be independent of him, was to make him his enemy; and it can be no wonder that a sovereign so proud and powerful as the Czar, chose rather to stand the hazard of battle, than diminish the lustre, or compromise the independence, of his ancient crown.

The time, too, for resistance, seemed as favourable as Russia could ever expect. The war of Spain, though chequered in its fortune, was in no respect near a sudden end. It occupied two hundred and fifty thousand of the best and oldest French troops; demanded also an immense expenditure, and diminished, of course, the power of the French Emperor to carry on the war on the frontiers of Russia.. A conclusion of these wasting hostilities would

have rendered him far more formidable with respect to the quality, as well as the number, of his disposable forces, and it seemed the interest of Russia not to wait till that period should arrive.

The same arguments which recommended to Russia to chuse the immediate moment for resisting the extravagant pretensions of France, ought, in point of prudence, to have induced Napoleon to desist from urging such pretensions, and to avoid the voluntarily engaging in two wars at the same time, both of a character decidedly national, and to only one of which he could give the influence of his own talents and his own presence. His best and wisest generals, whom he consulted, or, to speak more properly, to whom he opened his purpose, used various arguments to induce him to alter, or at least defer, his resolution. He himself hesitated for more than a year, and was repeatedly upon the point of settling with Russia the grounds of disagreement betwixt them upon amicable terms.

The reasons of complaint, on the part of the Czar, were four in number.

I. The alarm given to Russia by the extension of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw by the treaty of Schœnbrun, as if it were destined to be the central part of an independent state, or kingdom, in Poland, to which those provinces of that dismembered country, which had be-

come part of Russia, were at some convenient time to be united. On this point the Czar demanded an explicit engagement, on the part of the French Emperor, that the kingdom of Poland should not be again established. Napoleon declined this form of guarantee, as it seemed to engage him to warrant Russia against an event which might happen without his co-operation; but he offered to pledge himself that he would not favour any enterprise which should, directly or indirectly, lead to the re-establishment of Poland as an independent state. This modified acquiescence in what was required by Russia fell considerably short of what the Czar wished; for the stipulation, as at first worded, would have amounted to an engagement on the part of France to join in opposing any step towards Polish independence; whereas, according to the modification which it received at Paris, it only implied that France should remain neuter if such an attempt should take place.

II. The wrong done by including the Duchy of Oldenburg, though guaranteed by the treaty of Tilsit to its prince, the Czar's near relative and ally, in the territory annexed to France, admitted of being compensated by an indemnification. But Russia desired that this indemnification should be either the city of Dantzic, or some equally important territory, on the frontiers of the Grand Duchy of War-

saw, which might offer an additional guarantee against the apprehended enlargement of that state. France would not listen to this, though she did not object to compensation elsewhere.

III. The third point in question, was the degree to which the Russian commerce with England was to be restricted. Napoleon proposed to grant some relaxation on the occasions where the produce of Russia was exported in exchange for that of England, to be effected by the way of mutual licenses.

IV. It was proposed to revise the Russian tariff of 1810, so as, without injuring the interests of Russia, it might relax the heavy duties imposed on the objects of French commerce.

From this statement, which comprehends the last basis on which Napoleon expressed himself willing to treat, it is quite evident, that had there not been a deeper feeling of jealousy and animosity betwixt the two Emperors, than those expressed in the subjects of actual debate betwixt them, these might have been accommodated in an amicable way. But as it was impossible for Napoleon to endure being called to account, like a sovereign of the second rate, or at least in the tone of an equal, by the Emperor of Russia; so the latter, more and more alarmed by the motions of the French armies, which were advancing into Pomerania, could not persuade himself, that, in agreeing to admit the present grounds of complaint,

Napoleon meant more than to postpone the fatal struggle for superiority, until he should find a convenient time to commence it with a more absolute prospect of success.

In the meantime, and ere the negotiations were finally broken off, Buonaparte's councillors urged him, with as much argument as they dared, to desist from running the hazard of an enterprise so remote, so hazardous, and so little called for. They contended, that no French interest, and no national point of honour, were involved in the disagreement which had arisen. The principles upon which the points of dispute might be settled, being in a manner agreed upon, they argued that their master should stop in his military preparations. To march an army into Prussia, and to call forth the Prussians as auxiliaries, would, they contended, be using measures towards Russia, which could not but bring on the war which they anxiously deprecated. To submit to menaces supported by demonstrations of open force, would be destructive of the influence of Russia, both at home and abroad. She could not be expected to give way without a struggle.

These advisers allowed, that a case might be conceived for justifying an exertion to destroy the power of Russia, a case arising out of the transactions between France and the other states of Europe, and out of the apprehension that these states, aggrieved and irritated by

the conduct of France, might be tempted to seek a leader, patron, and protector, in the Emperor Alexander. But this extremity, they alleged, could not exist so long as France had the means of avoiding a perilous war, by a mitigation of her policy towards her vassals and auxiliaries; for if the states whose revolt (so to call it) was apprehended, could be reconciled to France by a more lenient course of measures to be adopted towards them, they would lose all temptation to fly to Russia as a protector. In such case the power of Russia would no longer give jealousy to France, or compel her to rush to a dubious conflict, for the purpose of diminishing an influence which could not then become dangerous to the southern empire, by depriving France of her clientage.

It might have been added, though it could not be so broadly spoken out, that in this point of view nothing would have been more easy for France, than to modify or soften her line of policy in favour of the inferior states, in whose favour the Russian interference was expected or apprehended. That policy had uniformly been a system of insult and menace. The influence which France had gained in Europe grew less out of treaty than fear, founded on the recollection of former wars. All the states of Germany felt the melancholy consequences of the existence of despotic power

vested in men, who, like Napoleon himself, and the military governors whom he employed, were new to the exercise and enjoyment of their authority; and, on the other hand, the French Emperor and his satellites felt, towards the people of the conquered, or subjected states, the constant apprehension which a conscious sense of injustice produces in the minds of oppressors, namely, that the oppressed only watch for a safe opportunity to turn against them. There was therefore no French interest, or even point of honour, which called on Napoleon to make war on Alexander; and the temptation seems to have amounted solely to the desire on Napoleon's part to fight a great battle, —to gain a great victory,—to occupy, with his victorious army, another great capital,—and, in fine, to subject to his arms the power of Russia, which, of all the states on the Continent, remained the only one that could be properly termed independent of France.

It was in this light that the question of peace and war was viewed by the French politicians of the day; and it is curious to observe, in the reports we have of their arguments, the total absence of principle which they display in the examination of it. They dwell on the difficulty of Napoleon's undertaking, upon its dangers, upon its expense, upon the slender prospect of any remuneration by the usual modes

of confiscation, plunder, or levy of contributions. They enlarge, too, upon the little probability there was, that success in the intended war would bring to a conclusion the disastrous contest in Spain; and all these various arguments are insinuated or urged with more or less vehemence, according to the character, the station, or the degree of intimacy with Napoleon, of the counsellor who ventured to use the topics. But among his advisers, none that we read or hear of, had the open and manly courage to ask, Where was the justice of this attack upon Russia? What had she done to merit it? The Emperors were friends by the treaty of Tilsit, confirmed by personal intimacy and the closest intercourse at Erfurt. How had they ceased to be such? What had happened since that period to place Russia, then the friend and confessed equal of France, in the situation of a subordinate and tributary state? On what pretence did Napoleon confiscate to his own use the Duchy of Oldenburg, acknowledged as the property of Alexander's brother-in-law, by an express article in the treaty of Tilsit? By what just right could he condemn the Russian nation to all the distresses of his Anti-commercial System, while he allowed them to be a free and independent state?—Above all, while he considered them as a sovereign and a people entitled to be

treated with the usual respect due between powers that are connected by friendly treaties, with what pretence of justice, or even decency, could he proceed to enforce claims so unfounded in themselves, by introducing his own forces on their frontier, and arming their neighbours against them for the same purpose? Of these pleas, in moral justice, there was not a word urged; nor was silence wonderful on this fruitful topic, since to insist upon it would have been to strike at the fundamental principle of Buonaparte's policy, which was, never to neglect a present advantage for the sake of observing a general principle. « Let us hear of no general principles, » said Buonaparte's favourite minister of the period. « Ours is a government not regulated by theory, but by emerging circumstances. »

We ought not to omit to mention, that Fouché, among others, took up a testimony against the Russian war. He had been permitted to return to his château of Ferrières, near Paris, under the apology that the air of Italy did not agree with his constitution. But Napoleon distrusted him, and the police were commissioned to watch with the utmost accuracy the proceedings of their late master. Fouché was well aware of this; and, desirous that his remonstrance with the Emperor should have all the force of an unexpected argument,

he shut himself up in the strictest seclusion while engaged in composing a production, which perhaps he hoped might be a means of recalling him to recollection, if not to favour.

In an able and eloquent memorial, Fouché reminded Buonaparte, that he was already the absolute master of the finest empire the world had ever seen; and that all the lessons of history went to demonstrate the impossibility of attaining universal monarchy. The French empire had arrived, according to the reasoning of this able statesman, at that point when its ruler should rather think of securing and consolidating his present acquisitions, than of achieving farther conquests, since, whatever his empire might acquire in extent, it was sure to lose in solidity. Fouché stated the extent of the country which Napoleon was about to invade, the poverty of the soil, the rigour of the climate, and the distance which each fresh victory must remove him from his resources, annoyed as his communications were sure to be by nations of Cossacks and Tartars. He implored the Emperor to remember the fate of Charles XII. of Sweden. « If that warlike monarch, » he said, « had not, like Napoleon, half Europe in arms at his back, neither had his opponent, the Czar Peter,

four hundred thousand soldiers, and fifty thousand Cossacks. The invader, it was stated, would have against him the dislike of the higher ranks, the fanaticism of the peasantry, the exertions of soldiers accustomed to the severity of the climate. There were besides to be dreaded, in case of the slightest reverse, the intrigues of the English, the fickleness of his continental allies, and even the awakening of discontent and conspiracy in France itself, should an idea generally arise, that he was sacrificing the welfare of the state to the insatiable desire of fresh enterprises and distant conquests. »

Fouché presented himself at the Tuileries, and requested an audience of the Emperor, hoping, doubtless, that the unexpected circumstance of his appearing there, and the reasoning in his memorial, would excite Napoleon's attention. To his great surprise, Napoleon, with an air of easy indifference, began the audience. « I am no stranger, Monsieur le Duc, to your errand here. You have a memorial to present me—give it me—I will read it, though I know already its contents. The war with Russia is not more agreeable to you than that of Spain. »

« Your Imperial Majesty will pardon my having ventured to offer some observations on

this important crisis?» said the statesman, astonished to find himself anticipated, when he believed he had laboured in the most absolute secrecy.

« It is no crisis,» resumed Napoleon; « merely a war of a character entirely political. Spain will fall when I have annihilated the English influence at St Petersburgh. I have eight hundred thousand men; and to one who has such an army, Europe is but an old prostitute, who must obey his pleasure. Was it not yourself who told me that the word *impossible* was not good French? I regulate my conduct more on the opinion of my army than the sentiments of you grandees, who are become too rich; and while you pretend anxiety for me, only are apprehensive of the general confusion which would follow my death. Don't disquiet yourself, but consider the Russian war as a wise measure, demanded by the true interests of France, and the general security. Am I to blame, because the great degree of power I have already attained forces me to assume the dictatorship of the world? My destiny is not yet accomplished—my present situation is but a sketch of a picture which I must finish. There must be one universal European code, one court of appeal. The same money, the same weights and measures, the same laws,

must have currency through Europe. I must make one nation out of all the European states, and Paris must be the capital of the world. At present you no longer serve me well, because you think my affairs are in danger; but before a year is over you will assist me with the same zeal and ardour as at the periods of Marengo and Austerlitz. You will see more than all this—it is I who assure you of it. Adieu, Monsieur le Duc. Do not play the disgraced courtier, or the captious critic of public affairs; and be so good as to put a little confidence in your Emperor.»

He then turned his back on Fouché, and left him to reflect by what means he, who so well knew all the machinations of the police, could himself have become exposed to their universal vigilance;[1] with some cause, perhaps, to

[1] Fouché afterwards remembered, that an individual in his neighbourhood, mayor of a municipality, and whom he himself had employed in matters of police, had one morning intruded rather hastily on him in his study, under pretext of pleading the cause of a distressed tenant; and concluded, that while he was searching for the papers concerning his visitor's ostensible business, Mr Mayor had an opportunity to glance at the sheets on his scrutoire, where the repetition of V. M. I. and R. M. (intimating your Imperial and Royal Majesty), betrayed that he was drawing up a memorial to Napoleon, and a word or two of the context explained its purport.

rejoice, that his secret employment, though unpleasing to Buonaparte, was not of a character to attract punishment as well as animadversion.

As Napoleon discountenanced and bore down the remonstrances of the subtle Fouché, so he represented to his various advisers the war upon which he was unalterably determined, in the light most proper to bring them over to his own opinion. To the army in general, the mere name of war was in itself a sufficient recommendation. It comprehended preferment, employment, plunder, distinction, and pensions. To the generals, it afforded mareschals' batons,—to the mareschals, crowns and sceptres;—to the civilians, he urged, as to Fouché, that it was a war of policy,—of necessity,—the last act in the drama, but indispensably requisite to conclude the whole;—to his most intimate friends he expressed his conviction that his fortune could not stand still; that it was founded on public opinion; and that if he did not continue to advance he must necessarily retrograde. To his uncle, Cardinal Fesch, he used a still more extraordinary argument. This prelate, a devout catholic, had begun to have compunction about his nephew's behaviour towards the Pope; and these sentiments mingled like an ominous

feeling with the alarms excited by the risks of this tremendous undertaking. With more than usual freedom he conjured his kinsman to abstain from tempting Providence. He entreated him not to defy heaven and earth, the wrath of man, and the fury of the elements, at the same time; and expressed his apprehension that he must at length sink under the weight of the enmity which he incurred daily. [1] The only answer which Buonaparte vouchsafed, was to lead the cardinal to the window, and, opening the casement, and pointing upwards, to ask him, « If he saw yonder star? »

« No, sire, » answered the astonished cardinal.

« But I see it, » answered Buonaparte; and turned from his relation as if he had fully confuted his arguments.

This speech might admit of two meanings; —either that Napoleon wished in this manner to express that his own powers of penetration were superior to those of the cardinal, or it

[1] It is not unworthy of notice, that the Emperor's mother (Madame Mère, as she was termed) always expressed a presentiment, that the fortunes of her family, splendid as they were, would be altered before her death; and when ridiculed by her children for her frugal disposition, she used to allege she was saving money for them in their distress; and in fact she lived to apply her hoards to that purpose.

might have reference to a certain superstitious confidence in his predestined good fortune, which we have already observed he was known to entertain. But as it was not Napoleon's fashion, whatever reliance he might place on such auguries, to neglect any means of insuring success within his power, we are next to inquire what political measures he had taken to carry on the proposed Russian war to advantage.

CHAPTER VII.

Allies on whose assistance Buonaparte might count.—Causes which alienated from him the Prince Royal of Sweden—who signs a Treaty with Russia.—Delicate situation of the King of Prussia, whose alliance the Emperor Alexander on that account declines.—A Treaty with France dictated to Prussia.—Relations between Austria and France—in order to preserve them, Buonaparte is obliged to come under an engagement not to revolutionize Poland.—His error of policy in neglecting to cultivate the alliance of the Porte.—Amount of Buonaparte's Army.—Levies of the Ban, the Second Ban, and Arrière-Ban, for the protection of France in the Emperor's absence.—Storming of Ciudad Rodrigo, by Lord Wellington.—Buonaparte makes overtures of Peace to Lord Castlereagh—The Correspondence broken off.—Ultimatum of Russia rejected, and made the direct cause of Hostilities by Napoleon—who sets out from Paris, 9th May, 1812—and meets the Sovereigns his allies at Dresden, where a variety of Royal Festivities are held.—A last attempt of Napoleon to negotiate with Alexander proves unsuccessful.

The several powers, who might in their different degrees of strength aid or impede the last and most daring of Buonaparte's undertakings, were,—Denmark, Saxony, Sweden, and Prussia, in the north of Europe; in the south, Austria, and the Turkish empire.

Denmark and Saxony were both devoted to the cause of France; but the former power, who had made over to Napoleon her seamen, had no land troops to spare for his assistance. The few that she had on foot were scarce sufficient to protect her against any enterprise of Sweden or England.

Saxony was also the firm friend of Napoleon, who had enlarged her dominions, and changed her ruler's electoral bonnet into a royal crown. It is true, if Poland was to be regenerated, as seemed to be the natural consequence of a war with Russia, the King of Saxony must have reckoned upon losing his ducal interest in the Grand Duchy of Warsaw. But from this he derived little present advantage, and as he was secure of indemnification, the apprehension of that loss did not prevent him from following the banner of Napoleon, with the same good will as ever.

Very different was the condition of Sweden. That kingdom, since the reign of Francis I., had been the ancient and natural ally of France against Russia; in acting against which last power her local advantages afforded great facility. Sweden was also governed at the moment by a Frenchman. But the Prince Royal had received more injuries and affronts, than favours, at the hands of the Emperor Napoleon, and the violent policy which the latter was in the habit of using to-

wards those of his allies and neighbours, who did not submit unresistingly to all his demands, had alienated from France the hearts of the Swedes, and from his own person the friendship of his old companion in arms. We have mentioned the mode of argument, or rather declamation, which he had used to compel the Swedes into a total exclusion of English manufactures, contrary to a reservation made in a recent treaty, by which the Swedes had retained the right of importing colonial goods and salt, while consenting to exclude British commodities generally. With the same urgency and menaces, he had compelled the Crown Prince to declare war against Britain.

But although Napoleon succeeded in both points, he could not oblige Britain to treat Sweden as a belligerent power. On the contrary, England seemed not in the slightest degree to alter the relations of amity to a state whom she considered as having adopted the attitude of an enemy towards her, merely from compulsion too powerful to be resisted. This moderation on the part of Great Britain, did not prevent Sweden from feeling all the evils of the anti-social system of Buonaparte. Her commerce was reduced to a mere coasting-trade, and her vessels skulked from port to port exposed to the depredations of Danish and French privateers, who seized upon and confiscated upwards of fifty Swedish ships, under pretence of enforcing the non-intercourse sys-

tem. The Prince Royal applied for redress at the court of Paris; but although vague promises were given, yet neither were the acts of piracy discontinued, nor any amends made for those daily committed. The Baron Agguier, who was the French envoy at Stockholm, used, according to Bernadotte's expression, the language of a Roman proconsul, without remembering that he did not speak to slaves.

When asked, for example, to state categorically what Napoleon expected from Sweden, and what he proposed to grant her in return, Alquier answered, that «the Emperor expected from Sweden compliance in every point conformable to his system; after which it would be time enough to inquire into what his Imperial Majesty might be disposed to do in favour of Sweden.»

On another occasion, the French envoy had the assurance to decline farther intercourse with the Crown Prince on the subject of his mission, and to desire that some other person might be appointed to communicate with him. There can be no doubt, that, in this singular course of diplomacy, Baron Alquier obeyed his master's instructions, who was determined to treat the Prince Royal of Sweden, emancipated as he was from his allegiance to France by letters patent from the Imperial Chancery, as if he had still been his subject, and serving in his armies. Napoleon went so far as to say, be-

fore his courtiers, that he had a mind to make Bernadotte finish his lessons in the Swedish language in the Castle of Vincennes. It is even said, that the Emperor thought seriously of putting this threat into execution, and that a plot was actually formed to seize the person of the Prince Royal, putting him on board a vessel, and bringing him prisoner to France. But he escaped this danger by the information of an officer named Salazar, formerly an aide-de-camp of Marmont, who conveyed to the Prince timely information of the outrage which was intended.[1]

With so many causes of mutual animosity between France and Sweden, all arising out of the impolitic vehemence by which Buonaparte endeavoured to drive, rather than lead, the Prince Royal into the measures he desired, it can hardly be supposed that the last would neglect any opportunity to assert his independence, and his resolution not to submit to a superiority so degrading in itself, and so ungraciously and even unmercifully exercised.

Such was the state of matters betwixt the two countries, when, from the approaching war with Russia, the assistance of Sweden became essential to France. But what bait could Napoleon hold out to bring back an alienated friend? He might, indeed, offer to assist Ber-

[1] Appendix, No. I., p. 649.

nadotte in regaining the province of Finland, which, by the connivance of Napoleon, had been conquered by Russia. But the Crown Prince concluded, that, to enter into a war with the view of recovering Finland, would occasion expenses which the country could not afford, and which the acquisition of Finland could not compensate, even supposing it sure to be accomplished. Besides, the repossession of Finland would engage Sweden in perpetual disputes with Russia, whereas the two nations, separated by the Gulf of Bothnia, had at present no cause of difference. On the other hand, by siding with Russia in the great contest which was impending, Sweden might expect the assistance of that empire, as well as of Britain, to achieve from Denmark, the ally of France, the conquest of her kingdom of Norway, which, in its geographical situation, lay so conveniently for Sweden, and afforded her the whole range of sea-coast along the western shores of Scandinavia. It is said that the Prince Royal offered to Napoleon to enter into a league, offensive and defensive, with France, providing Norway as well as Finland were added to his dominions; but the Emperor rejected the terms with disdain. The whole alleged negotiation, however, has been disputed and denied.

So soon as Buonaparte found there was no

hope of conciliating the Prince Royal, which indeed he scarce seems seriously to have attempted, he proceeded, without waiting for the ceremony of declaring war, to strike against Sweden the most severe, or rather the only blow, in his power. In January, 1812, General Davoust marched into Swedish Pomerania, the only possession of Sweden south of the Baltic Sea, seized upon the country and its capital, and proceeded to menace the military occupation of Prussia, so far as that country was not already in the hands of France.

Receiving no satisfaction for this aggression, Sweden, 24th March, 1812, signed a treaty with Russia, declaring war against France, and proposing a diversion, with a joint force of twenty-five or thirty thousand Swedes, together with fifteen or twenty thousand Russians, upon some point of Germany. And the Emperor of Russia became bound, either by negotiation or military co-operation, to unite the kingdom of Norway to that of Sweden, and to hold the Russian army, which was at present in Finland, as disposable for that purpose. Thus was the force of Sweden, rendered yet more considerable by the high military character of its present chief, thrown into the scale against France, to whom, but for the passionate and impolitic character of Napoleon's proceedings towards her, she might, in

all probability, have remained the same useful and faithful ally which she had been since the alliance of Francis I. with Gustavus Vasa.

No reason can be discovered for insulting Sweden at the precise moment when her co-operation would have been so useful, excepting the animosity of Napoleon against a prince whom he regarded as an ancient rival before the 18th Brumaire, and now as a contumacious and rebellious vassal. A due regard to the honour and interest of France, would have induced him to lay aside such personal considerations. But this does not appear to have been in Buonaparte's nature, who, if he remembered benefits, had also a tenacious recollection of enmities, said to be peculiar to the natives of Corsica. When this feeling obtained the ascendancy, he was too apt to sacrifice his policy to his spleen.

The situation of the King of Prussia, at the breaking out of the dispute between the empires of France and Russia, was truly embarrassing. His position lying betwixt the contending parties, rendered neutrality almost impossible; and if he took up arms, it was a matter of distracting doubt on which side he ought to employ them. Oppressed by French exactions and French garrisons; instigated, besides, by the secret influence of the Tugendbund, the people of Prussia were almost una-

nimous in their eager wish to seize the sword against France, nor was the King less desirous to redeem the independence, and revenge the sufferings, of his kingdom. The recollections of an amiable and beloved Queen, who had died in the prime of life, heart-broken with the distresses of her country, with her hands locked in those of her husband, called also for revenge on France, which had insulted her when living, and slandered her when dead.[1]

Accordingly it is now well understood, that the first impulse of the King of Prussia's mind was to throw himself into the arms of Russia, and offer, should it cost him his life and crown, to take share in the war as his faithful ally. But the Emperor Alexander was sensible that, in accepting this offered devotion, he would come under an obligation to protect Prussia in case of those reverses, which might be almost reckoned on as likely to occur in the

[1] In the *Moniteur*, a scandalous intrigue was repeatedly alluded to as existing between this princess and the Emperor Alexander, and both to Monsieur Las Cases and to others, Buonaparte affirmed the same personally; telling, at the same time, as a good jest, that he himself had kept the King of Prussia out of the way, to provide the lovers a stolen meeting. These averments are so inconsistent with the character universally assigned to this high-spirited and unhappy princess, that we have no hesitation to assign them directly to calumny; a weapon which Napoleon never disdained to wield, whether in private or national controversy

early part of the campaign. The strongest fortresses in Prussia were in the hands of the French, the army of the King did not amount to more than forty thousand men, and there was no time to arm or organize the national forces. In order to form a junction with these forty thousand men, or as many of them as could be collected, it would be necessary that Alexander should precipitate the war, and march a strong army into Silesia, upon which the Prussians might rally. But such an army, when it had attained its object, must have had in front the whole forces of France, Saxony, and the Confederacy of the Rhine, while the hostile troops of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, with probably a body of Austrian auxiliaries, would have been in their rear. This premature movement in advance, would have resembled the conduct of Austria in the unhappy campaigns of 1805 and 1809; in both of which she precipitated her armies into Bavaria, in hopes of acquiring allies, but only exposed them to the decisive defeats of Ulm and Eckmuhl. It would also have been like the equally ill-omened advance of the Prussian army in 1806, when, hurrying forward to compel Saxony to join him, the Duke of Brunswick gave occasion to the unhappy battle of Jena.

Experience and reflection, therefore, had led the Russian Emperor and cabinet to be of

opinion, that they ought to avoid encountering the French in the early part of the campaign; and, in consequence, that far from advancing to meet them, they should rather suffer the invaders to involve themselves in the immense wastes and forests of the territories of Russia itself, where supplies and provisions were not to be found by the invader, and where every peasant would prove an armed enemy. The support which could be derived from an auxiliary army of Prussians, amounting only to 40,000 men, of whom perhaps the half could not be drawn together, was not, it appeared, an adequate motive for altering the plan of the campaign, which had been founded on the most mature consideration. The Emperor Alexander, therefore, declined accepting of the King of Prussia's alliance, as only tending to bring upon that Prince misfortunes, which Russia had not even the chance of averting, without entirely altering those plans of the campaign which had been deliberately adopted. Foreseeing at the same time that this refusal on his part must have made it necessary for Frederick, whose situation rendered neutrality impossible, to take part with France, the Emperor Alexander generously left him at liberty to take the measures, and form the connexions, which his circumstances rendered inevitable, assuring him, nevertheless, that if Russia gained the ascendant, Prussia should

derive the same advantage from the victory, whatever part she might be compelled to adopt during the struggle.

While the King of Prussia saw his alliance declined by Russia, as rather burdensome than beneficial, he did not find France at all eager to receive him on her part as a brother of the war. He offered his alliance to Buonaparte repeatedly, and especially in the months of March, May, and August, 1811; but receiving no satisfaction, he began to be apprehensive that his destruction was intended. There was some reason for this fear, for Napoleon seems to have entertained a personal dislike towards Frederick, and is said to have exclaimed, when he was looking over a map of the Prussian territories, « Is it possible I can have been simple enough to leave that man in possession of so large a kingdom?» There is great reason, besides, to suppose, that Napoleon may have either become acquainted with the secret negotiations betwixt Prussia and Russia, or may have been induced to assume from probability the fact that such had existed. He hesitated, certainly, whether or not he would permit Prussia to remain an independent power.

At length, however, on the 24th of February 1812, a treaty was dictated to Frederick, under condition of subscribing which, the name and title of King of Prussia were to be yet left him; failing his compliance, Davoust, who had oc-

cupied Swedish Pomerania, was to march into Prussia, and treat it as a hostile country. In thus sparing for the time a monarch, of whom he had every reason to be jealous, Napoleon seems to have considered it more advisable to use Frederick's assistance than to throw him into the arms of Russia. The conditions of this lenity were severe; Prussia was to place at the disposal of France about twenty thousand men, with sixty pieces of artillery, the disposable part of the poor remnant of the standing army of the Great Frederick. She was also to supply the French army with every thing necessary for their sustenance as they passed through her dominions; but the expense of these supplies was to be imputed as part of the contributions imposed on Prussia by France, and not yet paid. Various other measures were taken to render it easy for the French, in case of necessity, to seize such fortresses belonging to Prussia as were not already in their hands, and to keep the Prussian people as much as possible disarmed, a rising amongst them being considered inevitable, if the French arms should sustain any reverse. Thus, while Russia fortified herself with the assistance of France's old ally Sweden, France advanced against Russia, supported by the remaining army of Frederick of Prussia, who was at heart Alexander's best well-wisher.

Napoleon had, of course, a weighty voice in the councils of his father-in-law of Austria. But the Austrian cabinet were far from regarding his plans of ambitious aggrandizement with a partial eye. The acute Metternich had been able to discover and report to his master, on his return to Vienna in the spring of :811, that the marriage which had just been celebrated, would not have the effect of inducing Napoleon to sheathe his sword, or of giving to Europe permanent tranquillity. And now although on the approach of the hostilities into which they were to be involved by their formidable ally, Austria agreed to supply an auxiliary army of 30,000 men, under Prince Schwartzenberg, it seems probable that she remembered, at the same time, the moderate and lenient mode of carrying on the war practised by Russia, when the ally of Napoleon during the campaign of Wagram, and gave her General secret instructions to be no further active in the campaign than the decent supporting of the part af an auxiliary peremptorily required.

In one most material particular, the necessity of consulting the interests of Austria interfered with Napoleon's readiest and most formidable means of annoying Russia. We have repeatedly alluded to the re-establishment of Poland as an independent kingdom, as a measure which would have rent from

Russia some of the finest provinces which connect her with Europe, and would have gone a certain length in thrusting her back into the character of an Asiatic sovereignty, unconnected with the politics of the civilized world. Such reconstruction of Poland was however impossible, so long as Austria continued to hold Polish Galicia; and that state, in her treaty of alliance with France against Russia, made it an express condition, that no attempt should be made for the restoration of Polish independence by Napoleon, without the consent of Austria, or without making compensation to her for being, in the event supposed, deprived of her share of Poland. This compensation, it was stipulated, was to consist in the retrocession, on the part of France, of the Illyrian provinces, yielded up by his Imperial Majesty of Austria at the treaty of Schœnbrun.

By submitting to this embargo on his proceedings in Poland, Napoleon lost all opportunity of revolutionizing that military country, from which he drew therefore little advantage, unless from the Duchy of Warsaw. Nothing but the tenacity with which Buonaparte retained every territory that fell into his power, would have prevented him from at once simplifying this complicated engagement, by assigning to Austria those Illyrian provinces, which were entirely useless to France, but on which her ally set great value, and stipulating

in return,—what Austria would then have willingly granted,—the power of disposing, according to his own pleasure, as well of Polish Galicia, as of such parts of the Polish provinces as should be conquered from Russia; or in case, as De Pradt insinuates, the court of Austria were averse to the exchange, it was in the power of Napoleon to have certainly removed their objections, by throwing Venice itself into the scale. But we have good reason to believe that Illyria would have been a sufficient inducement to the transaction.

We cannot suppose Buonaparte blind to the importance of putting, as he expressed it, all Poland on horseback; but whether it was, that in reality he did not desire to establish an independent state upon any terms, or whether he thought it hard to give up the Illyrian provinces, ceded to France in property, in order to reconstruct a kingdom, which, nominally at least, was to be independent; or whether, in fine, he had an idea that, by vague promises and hopes, he could obtain from the Poles all the assistance he desired,—it is certain that he embarrassed himself with this condition in favour of Austria, in a manner which tended to render complex and difficult all that he afterwards attempted in Polish affairs; and lost the zealous co-operation and assistance of the Lithuanians, at a time when it would have been invaluable to him.

Turkey remains to be noticed as the sole remaining power whom Buonaparte ought in prudence to have propitiated, previous to attacking Russia, of which empire she is the natural enemy, as she was also held the natural and ancient ally of France. Were it not that the talents of Napoleon were much better fitted to crush enemies than to gain or maintain friends, it would be difficult to account for his losing influence over the Porte at this important period. The Turkish government had been rendered hostile to France by the memorable invasion of Egypt; but Sultan Selim, an admirer of Napoleon's valour and genius, had become the friend of the Emperor of France. Selim was cut off by a conspiracy, and his successor was more partial to the English interests. In the treaty of Tilsit, the partition of Turkey was actually agreed upon, though the term was adjourned;[1] as, at the negotiations

[1] The fact is now pretty generally admitted to have been as stated in the text. But in the public treaty, it appeared that France negotiated an armistice, called that of Slobodsea, by which it was stipulated that the two disputed provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia were to be restored to the Turks. But the armistice, as had previously been settled between Napoleon and Alexander, broke up without any such restoration; and a Congress, which was held at Jassy for the arrangement of the quarrel between the Porte and Court of St Petersburgh having been also dissolved without coming to an agreement, the war between the Turks and Russians recommenced upon the Danube.

of Erfurt, Napoleon agreed to abandon the Turkish dominions as far as the Danube, to become the property of Russia, if it should be in her power to conquer them.*

The Court of St Petersburgh were ill-advised enough to make the attempt, although they ought to have foreseen, even then, that the increasing power of France should have withheld them from engaging in any scheme of conquest at that period. Indeed their undertaking this war with the Ottoman Empire, a proceeding so impolitic in case of a rupture with France, may be quoted to show the Emperor Alexander's confidence that no such event was likely to take place, and consequently to prove his own determination to observe good faith towards Napoleon.

The Turks made a far better defence than had been anticipated; and though the events of war were at first unfavourable to them, yet at length the Grand Vizier obtained a victory before Routschouk, or at least gave the Russian general such a serious check as obliged him to raise the siege of that place. But the gleam of victory on the Turkish banners was of brief duration. They were attacked by the Russians in their entrenched camp, and defeated in a battle so sanguinary, that the vanquished army was almost annihilated. The Turks, however, continued to maintain the war, forgotten and neglected as they were by

the Emperor of France, whose interest it chiefly was, considering his views against Russia, to have sustained them in their unequal struggle against that formidable power. In the mean while, hostilities languished, and negotiations were commenced; for the Russians were of course desirous, so soon as a war against France became a probable event, to close that with Turkey, which must keep engaged a very considerable army, at a time when all their forces were necessary to oppose the expected attack of Napoleon.

At this period, and so late as the 21st March 1812, it seemed to occur all at once to Buonaparte's recollection, that it would be highly politic to maintain, or rather to renew, his league with a nation, of whom it was at the time most important to secure the confidence. His ambassador was directed to urge the Grand Seignor in person to move towards the Danube, at the head of one hundred thousand men; in consideration of which, the French Emperor proposed not only to obtain possession for them of the two disputed provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia, but also to procure the restoration to the Porte of the Crimea.

This war-breathing message arrived too late; the Porte having adopted a pacific line of policy. The splendid promises of France succeeded too abruptly to so many years of neglect, to obtain credit for sincerity. The en-

voys of England, with a dexterity which it has not been always their fortune to display, obtained a complete victory in diplomacy over those of France, and were able to impress on the sublime Porte the belief, that though Russia was their natural enemy among European nations, yet a peace of some permanence might be secured with her, under the guarantee of England and Sweden; whereas, if Napoleon should altogether destroy Russia, the conquest of the Turkish Empire, of which he had already meditated the division, would be a measure no state could have influence to prevent, as, in subduing Russia, he would overcome the last terrestrial barrier to his absolute power. It gives no slight idea of the general terror and suspicion impressed by the very name of Napoleon, that a barbarous people like the Turks, who generally only comprehend so much of politics as lies straight before them, should have been able to understand that there was wisdom in giving peace on reasonable terms to an old and inveterate enemy, rather than, by assisting in his destruction, to contribute to the elevation of a power still more formidable, more ambitious, and less easily opposed. The peace of Bucharest was accordingly negotiated betwixt Russia and Turkey, of which we shall hereafter have occasion to speak.

Thus was France, on the approaching struggle, deprived of her two ancient allies, Swe-

den and Turkey. Prussia she brought to the field like a slave at her chariot-wheels; Denmark and Saxony in the character of allies, who were favoured so long as they were sufficiently subservient; and Austria, as a more equal confederate, but who had contrived to stipulate, that, in requital of an aid coldly and unwillingly granted, the French Emperor should tie himself down by engagements respecting Poland, which interfered with his using his influence over that country in the manner which would best have served his purposes. The result must lead to one of two conclusions. Either that Napoleon, confident in the immense preparations of his military force, disdained to enter into negotiations to obtain that assistance which he could not directly command, or else that his talents in politics were inferior to those which he displayed in military affairs.

It is true, that if the numbers, and we may add the quality, of the army which France brought into the field on this momentous occasion, were alone to be considered, Napoleon might be excused for holding cheap the assistance which he might have derived from Sweden or the Porte. He had anticipated the conscription of 1811, and he now called out that of 1812; so that it became plain, that so long as Napoleon lived and warred, the conscription of the first class would be,—not a conditional regulation, to be acted or not acted

upon according to occasion,—but a regular and never-to-be-remitted tax of eighty thousand men, annually levied, without distinction, on the youth of France. To the amount of these conscriptions for two years, were to be added the contingents of household kings, vassal princes, subjected republics,—of two-thirds of Europe, in short, which were placed under Buonaparte's command. No such army had taken the field since the reign of Xerxes, supposing the exaggerated accounts of the Persian invasion to be admitted as historical. The head almost turns dizzy as we read the amount of their numbers.

The gross amount of the whole forces of the empire of France, and its dependencies and allies, is thus given by Boutourlin:—

Total amount of the French army......	850,000 men.
The army of Italy, under the Viceroy Eugène..........................	50,000
——— of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, with other Poles................	60,000
——— of Bavaria.................	40,000
——— of Saxony.................	30,000
——— of Westphalia..............	30,000
——— of Wirtemberg.............	15,000
——— of Baden..................	9,000
——— of the Princes of the Confederacy of the Rhine................	23,000
The corps of Prussian Auxiliaries.......	20,000
——— of Austrian Auxiliaries.......	30,000
The army of Naples.................	30,000
	1,187,000 men.

But to approximate the actual force, we must deduce from this total of 1,187,000, about 387,000 men, for those in the hospital, absent upon furlough, and for incomplete regiments. Still there remains the appalling balance of eight hundred thousand men, ready to maintain the war; so that Buonaparte was enabled to detach an army to Russia greatly superior to what the Emperor Alexander could, without immense exertions, get under arms, and this without withdrawing any part of his forces from Spain.

Still, however, in calculating all the chances attending the eventful game on which so much was to be staked, and to encounter such attempts upon France as England might by his absence be tempted to make, Napoleon judged it prudent to have recourse to additional means of national defence, which might extend the duty of military service still more widely among his subjects than was effected even by the conscription. As the measure was never but in one particular brought into general activity, it may be treated of the more slightly. The system consisted in a levy of national guards, divided into three general classes; the Ban, the Second Ban, and Arrière-Ban; for Buonaparte loved to retain the phrases of the old feudal institutions. The First Ban was to contain all men, from twenty to twenty-six years, who had not been called to serve in the army.

The Second Ban included all capable of bearing arms, from the age of twenty-six to that of forty. The Arrière-Ban comprehended all able-bodied men from forty to sixty. The levies from these classes were not to be sent beyond the frontiers of France, and were to be called out in succession, as the danger pressed. They were divided into cohorts of eleven hundred and twenty men each. But it was the essential part of this project that it placed one hundred cohorts of the First Ban (that is, upwards of one hundred thousand men, between twenty and twenty-six years), at the immediate disposal of the Minister of War. In short, it was a new form of conscription, with the advantage, to the recruits, of limited service.

The celebrated philosopher Count Lacépède, who, from his researches into natural history, as well as from the ready eloquence with which he could express the acquiescence of the Senate in whatever scheme was proposed by the Emperor, had acquired the title of King of Reptiles, had upon this occasion his usual task of justifying the Imperial measures. In this allotment of another mighty draught of the youth of France to the purposes of military service, at a time when only the unbounded ambition of Napoleon rendered such a measure necessary, he could discover nothing save a new and affecting proof of the Emperor's paternal regard for his subjects. The youths, he said,

would be relieved by one-sixth part of a cohort at a time; and, being at an age when ardour of mind is united to strength of body, they would find in the exercise of arms rather salutary sport and agreeable recreation, than painful labour or severe duty. Then the express prohibition to quit the frontiers would be, their parents might rest assured, an absolute check on the fiery and impetuous character of the French soldier, and prevent the young men from listening to their headlong courage, and rushing forward into distant fields of combat, which no doubt there might be otherwise reason to apprehend. All this sounded very well, but the time was not long ere the Senate removed their writ *ne exeat regno*, in the case of these hundred cohorts; and, whether hurried on by their own impetuous valour, or forced forward by command of their leaders, they were all engaged in foreign service, and marched off to distant and bloody fields, from which few of them had the good fortune to return.

While the question of peace or war was yet trembling in the scales, news arrived from Spain that Lord Wellington had opened the campaign by an enterprise equally successfully conceived and daringly executed. Ciudad Rodrigo, which the French had greatly strengthened, was one of the keys of the frontier between Spain and Portugal. Lord Wellington had blockaded it, as we have seen, in the pre-

ceding year, but more with the purpose of compelling General Marmont to concentrate his forces for its relief, than with any hope of taking the place. But in the end of December, 1811, the French heard with surprise and alarm that the English army, suddenly put in motion, had opened trenches before Ciudad Rodrigo, and were battering in breach.

Marmont once more put his whole forces in motion, to prevent the fall of a place which was of the greatest consequence to both parties; and he had every reason to hope for success, since Ciudad Rodrigo, before its fortifications had been improved by the French, had held out against Masséna for more than a month, though his army consisted of 100,000 men. But in the present instance, within ten days from the opening of the siege, the place was carried by storm, almost under the very eyes of the experienced general who was advancing to its relief, and who had no alternative but to retire again to cantonments, and ponder upon the skill and activity which seemed of a sudden to have inspired the British forces.

Lord Wellington was none of those generals who think that an advantage, or a victory gained, is sufficient work for one campaign. The French were hardly reconciled to the loss of Ciudad Rodrigo, so extraordinary did it appear to them, when Badajos was invested, a much

stronger place, which had stood a siege of thirty-six days against the French in the year 1811, although the defences were then much weaker, and the place commanded by an officer of no talent, and dubious fidelity. It wa now, with incomprehensible celerity, batter breached, stormed, and taken, within twelve days after the opening of the trenches. Two French marshals had in vain interfered to prevent this catastrophe. Marmont made an unsuccessful attempt upon Ciudad Rodrigo, and assumed the air of pushing into Portugal; but no sooner did he learn the fall of the place, than he commenced his retreat from Castel-Branco. Soult, who had advanced rapidly to relieve Badajos, was in the act, it is said, of informing a circle of his officers that it was the commands of the Emperor—commands never under any circumstances to be disobeyed—that Badajos should be relieved, when an officer, who had been sent forward to reconnoitre, interrupted the shouts of « *Vive l'Empereur!* » with the equally dispiriting and incredible information, that the English colours were flying on the walls.

These two brilliant achievements were not only of great importance by their influence on the events of the campaign, but still more so as they indicated that our military operations had assumed an entirely new character, and that the British soldiers, as now conducted,

had not only the advantage of their own strength of body and natural courage, not only the benefit of the resources copiously supplied by the wealthy nation to whom they belonged, but also, as began to be generally allowed, an undoubted superiority in military art and science. The objects of the campaign were admirably chosen, for the exertion to be made was calculated with a degree of accuracy which dazzled and bewildered the enemy; and though the loss incurred in their attainment was very considerable, yet it was not in proportion to the much greater advantages attained by success.

Badajos fell on the 9th April; and on the 18th of that month, an overture of pacific tendency was made by the French government to that of Britain. It is not unlikely that Buonaparte, on beholding his best commanders completely out-generalled before Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajos, might foresee in this inauspicious commencement the long train of defeat and disaster which befel the French in that campaign of 1812, the events of which could not have failed to give liberty to Spain, had Spain, or rather had her government, been united among themselves, and cordial in supporting their allies.

It might be Lord Wellington's successes, or the lingering anxiety to avoid a war involving so many contingencies as that of Russia; or it might be a desire to impress the French public

that he was always disposed towards peace, that induced Napoleon to direct the Duke of Bassano to write a letter to Lord Castlereagh, proposing that the integrity and independence of Spain should be guaranteed under the *present reigning dynasty;* that Portugal should remain under the rule of the Princes of Braganza; Sicily under that of Ferdinand; and Naples under Murat; each nation, in this manner, retaining possession of that which the other had not been able to wrench from them by force of war. Lord Castlereagh immediately replied, that if the reign of King Joseph were meant by the phrase « the dynasty actually reigning, » he must answer explicitly, that England's engagements to Ferdinand VII. and the Cortes presently governing Spain, rendered her acknowledging him impossible.

The correspondence went no farther. The nature of the overture served to show the tenacity of Buonaparte's character, who, in treating for peace, would yield nothing save that which the fate of war had actually placed beyond his reach; and expected the British to yield up to him the very kingdom of Spain, whose fate depended upon the bloody arbitrement of the sword. It also manifested the insincerity with which he could use words to mislead those who treated with him. He had in many instances, some of which we have quoted, laid it down as a sacred principle, that princes of his blood

called to reign over foreign states, should remain still the subjects of France and vassals of its Emperor, whose interest they were bound to prefer on all occasions to that of the countries they were called to govern. Upon these grounds he had compelled the abdication of King Louis of Holland; and how was it possible for him to expect to receive credit, when he proposed to render Spain independent under Joseph, whose authority was unable to control even the French marshals who acted in his name?

This feeble effort towards a general peace having altogether miscarried, it became subject of consideration, whether the approaching breach betwixt the two great empires could yet be prevented. The most active preparations for war were taking place on both sides. Those of Russia were defensive; but she mustered great armies on the Niemen, as if in expectation of an assault; while France was rapidly pouring troops into Prussia, and into the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, and assuming those positions most favourable for invading the Russian frontier. Yet amid preparations for war, made on such an immense scale as Europe had never before witnessed, there seemed to be a lingering wish on the part of both sovereigns, even at this late hour, to avoid the conflict. This indeed might have been easily done, had there been on the part of Napoleon a hearty

desire to make peace, instead of what could only be termed a degree of hesitation to commence hostilities. In fact, the original causes of quarrel were already settled, or, what is the same thing, principles had been fixed, on which their arrangement might be easily adjusted. Yet still the preparations for invading Russia became more and more evident—the purpose was distinctly expressed in the treaty between France and Prussia; and the war did not appear the less certain that the causes of it seemed to be in a great measure abandoned. The anxiety of Alexander was therefore diverted from the source of the dispute, to its important consequences; and he became most naturally more solicitous about having the French troops withdrawn from the frontiers of Poland, than about the cause that originally brought them there.

Accordingly, Prince Kourakin, the Russian plenipotentiary, had orders to communicate to the Duke of Bassano his master's ultimatum. The grounds of arrangement proposed by the Czar were, the evacuation of Prussia and Pomerania by the French troops; a diminution of the garrison of Dantzic; and an amicable arrangement of the dispute between Napoleon and Alexander. On these conditions, which, in fact, were no more than necessary to assure Russia of France's peaceable intentions, the Czar agreed to place his commerce upon a system of licenses as conducted in France; to in-

troduce the clauses necessary to protect the French trade; and, farther, to use his influence with the Duke of Oldenburg, to obtain his consent to accept some reasonable indemnification for the territory, which had been so summarily annexed to France.

In looking back at this document, it appears to possess as much the character of moderation, and even of deference, as could be expected from the chief of a great empire. His demand that France, unless it were her determined purpose to make war, should withdraw the armies which threatened the Russian frontier, seems no more than common sense or prudence would commend. Yet this condition was made by Napoleon, however unreasonably, the direct cause of hostilities.

The person, in a private brawl, who should say to an angry and violent opponent, « Sheathe your sword, or at least lower its point, and I will accommodate with you, on your own terms, the original cause of quarrel,» would surely not be considered as having given him any affront, or other cause for instant violence. Yet Buonaparte, in nearly the same situation, resented, as an unatonable offence, the demand that he should withdraw his armies from a position, where they could have no other purpose save to overawe Russia. The demand, he said, was insolent; he was not accustomed to be addressed in that style, nor to regulate

his movements by the commands of a foreign sovereign. The Russian ambassador received his passports; and the unreasonable caprice of Napoleon, which considered an overture towards an amicable treaty as a gross offence, because it summoned him to desist from his menacing attitude, led to the death of millions, and the irretrievable downfall of the most extraordinary empire which the world had ever seen. On the 9th May, 1812, Buonaparte left Paris; the Russian ambassador had his passports for departure two days later.

Upon his former military expeditions, it had been usual for Napoleon to join his army suddenly, and with a slender attendance; but on the present occasion he assumed a style of splendour and dignity becoming one, who might, if any earthly sovereign ever could, have assumed the title of King of Kings. Dresden was appointed as a mutual rendezvous for all the kings, dominations, princes, dukes, and dependent royalties of every description, who were subordinate to Napoleon, or hoped for good or evil at his hands. The Emperor of Austria, with his Empress, met his mighty son-in-law upon this occasion, and the city was crowded with princes of the most ancient birth, as well as with others who claimed still higher rank, as belonging to the family of Napoleon. The King of Prussia also was present, neither a willing nor a welcome guest, unless so far as his

attendance was necessary to swell the victor's triumph. Melancholy in heart and in looks, he wandered through the gay and splendid scenes, a mourner rather than a reveller. But fate had amends in store, for a prince whose course, in times of unparalleled distress, had been marked by courage and patriotism.

Amidst all these dignitaries, no one interested the public so much as he, for whom, and by whom, the assembly was collected; the wonderful being who could have governed the world, but could not rule his own restless mind. When visible, Napoleon was the principal figure of the group; when absent, every eye was on the door, expecting his entrance. He was chiefly employed in business in his cabinet, while the other crowned personages (to whom, indeed, he left but little to do) were wandering abroad in quest of amusement. The feasts and banquets, as well as the assemblies of the royal personages and their suites, after the theatrical representations, were almost all at Napoleon's expense, and were conducted in a style of splendour, which made those attempted by any of the other potentates seem mean and paltry.

The youthful Empress had her share of these days of grandeur. «The reign of Maria Louisa,» said her husband, when in Elba, «has been very short, but she had much to make her enjoy it. She had the world at her

feet.» Her superior magnificence in dress and ornaments, gave her a great preeminence over her mother-in-law, the Empress of Austria, betwixt whom and Maria Louisa there seems to have existed something of that petty feud, which is apt to divide such relations in private life. To make the Austrian Empress some amends, Buonaparte informs us, that she often visited her daughter-in-law's toilet, and seldom went back without receiving some marks of her munificence. Perhaps we may say of this information, as Napoleon says of something else, that an Emperor should not have known these circumstances, or at least should not have told them. The truth is, Buonaparte did not love the Empress of Austria; and though he represents that high personage as showing him much attention, the dislike was mutual. The daughter of the Duke of Modena had not forgot her father's sufferings by the campaigns of Italy.

In a short time, however, the active spirit of Napoleon led him to tire of a scene, where his vanity might for a time be gratified, but which soon palled on his imagination as empty and frivolous. He sent for De Pradt, the Bishop of Malines, whose talents he desired to employ as ambassador at Warsaw, and in a singular style of diplomacy, thus gave him his commission. «I am about to make a trial of you. You may believe I did not send for you here

to say mass (which ceremony the bishop had performed that morning). You must keep a great establishment; have an eye to the women, their influence is essential in that country. You know Poland; you have read Rulhières. For me, I go to beat the Russians; time is flying; we must have all over by the end of September; perhaps we are even already too late. I am tired to death here; I have been here eight days playing the courtier to the Empress of Austria.» He then threw out indistinct hints of compelling Austria to quit her hold on Galicia, and accept an indemnification in Illyria, or otherwise remain without any. As to Prussia, he avowed his intention, when the war was over, to ruin her completely, and to strip her of Silesia. « I am on my way to Moscow,» he added. « Two battles there will do the business, I will burn Toula; the Emperor Alexander will come on his knees, and then is Russia disarmed. All is ready, and only waits my presence. Moscow is the heart of their empire; besides, I make war at the expense of the blood of the Poles. I will leave fifty thousand of my Frenchmen in Poland. I will convert Dantzic into another Gibraltar. I will give fifty millions a-year in subsidies to the Poles. I can afford the expense. Without Russia be included, the Continental System would be mere folly. Spain costs me very dear; without her I should be master of the world; but when I am so, my

son will have nothing to do but to keep his place, and it does not require to be very clever to do that. Go, take your instructions from Maret.»

The complete confidence of success implied in these disjointed, yet striking expressions, was general through all who approached Napoleon's person, whether French or foreigners. The young military men looked on the expedition against Russia as on a hunting party which was to last for two months. The army rushed to the fatal country, all alive with the hopes of plunder, pensions, and promotion. All the soldiers who were not included railed against their own bad luck, or the partiality of Napoleon, for detaining them from so triumphant an enterprise.

Meantime, Buonaparte made a last attempt at negotiation, or rather to discover what was the state of the Emperor Alexander's mind, who, while he was himself surrounded by sovereigns, as the sun by planets, remained lonely in his own orbit, collecting around him means of defence, which, immense as they were, seemed scarcely adequate to the awful crisis in which he stood. General Lauriston had been dispatched to Wilna, to communicate definitively with Alexander. Count de Narbonne, already noticed as the most adroit courtier of the Tuileries, was sent to invite the Czar to meet Napoleon at Dresden, in

hopes that, in a personal treaty, the two sovereigns might resume their habits of intimacy, and settle between themselves what they had been unable to arrange through their ambassadors. But Lauriston could obtain no audience of the Emperor, and the report of Narbonne was decidedly warlike. He found the Russians neither depressed nor elated, but arrived at the general conclusion, that war was become inevitable, and therefore determined to submit to its evils, rather than avoid them by a dishonourable peace.

CHAPTER VIII.

Napoleon's Plan of the Campaign against Russia—Understood and provided against by Barclay de Tolly, the Russian Generalissimo.—Statement of the Grand French Army—Of the Grand Russian Army.—Disaster on the river Wilia.—Difficulties of the Campaign, on the part of the French, stated and explained.—Their defective Commissariat and Hospital Department.—Great consequent losses.—Cause of Buonaparte's determination to advance.—His forced marches occasion actual delay.—Napoleon remains for some days at Wilna.—Abbé de Pradt—His intrigues to excite the Poles—Neutralized by Napoleon's engagements with Austria.—An attempt to excite Insurrection in Lithuania also fails.

In ancient history, we often read of the inhabitants of the northern regions, impelled by want, and by the desire of exchanging their frozen deserts for the bounties of a more genial climate, breaking forth from their own bleak regions, and, with all the terrors of an avalanche, bursting down upon those of the south. But it was reserved for our generation to behold the invasion reversed, and to see immense hosts of French, Germans, and Italians,

leaving their own fruitful, rich, and delightful regions, to carry at once conquest and desolation through the dreary pine forests, swamps, and barren wildernesses of Scythia. The philosopher, Hume, dedicated an Essay to consider, whether futurity might expect a new inundation of barbarian conquerors; a fresh « living cloud of war, » from the northern hives; but neither to him nor any one else had it occurred to anticipate the opposite danger, of combined hundreds of thousands from the most fair and fertile regions of Europe, moving at the command of a single man, for the purpose of bereaving the wildest country of Europe of its national independence. « Russia, » said Buonaparte, in one of his Delphic proclamations, « is dragged on by her fate; her destiny must be accomplished. Let us march; let us cross the Niemen; let us carry war into her territories. The second war of Poland will be as glorious to the French arms as the first; but the peace we shall conclude shall carry with it its guarantee, and terminate that haughty influence which Russia has exercised for more than fifty years on the affairs of Europe. » Napoleon's final object was here spoken out; it was to thrust Russia back upon her Asiatic dominions, and deprive her of her influence in European politics.

The address of the Russian Emperor to his troops was in a different, more manly, ration-

al, and intelligible strain, devoid of those blustering attempts at prophetic eloquence, which are in bad taste when uttered, and, if they may acquire some credit among the vulgar when followed by a successful campaign, become the most bitter of satires, if fortune does not smile on the vaticination. Alexander enforced on his subjects the various efforts which he had made for the preservation of peace, but which had proved fruitless. « It now only remains, » he said, « after invoking the Almighty Being who is the witness and defender of the true cause, to oppose our forces to those of the enemy. It is unnecessary to recal to generals, officers, and soldiers, what is expected from their loyalty and courage; the blood of the ancient Sclavonians circulates in their veins. Soldiers, you fight for your religion, your liberty, and your native land. Your Emperor is amongst you, and God is the enemy of the aggressor. »

The sovereigns who addressed their troops, each in his own peculiar mode of exhortation, had their different plans for the campaign. Buonaparte's was formed on his usual system of warfare. It was his primary object to accumulate a great force on the centre of the Russian line, to break it asunder, and cut off effectually as many divisions, as activity could surprise and over-master in such a struggle. To secure the possession of large towns, if pos-

sible one of the two capitals, Petersburgh or Moscow; and to grant that which he doubted not would by that time be humbly craved, the terms of a peace which should strip Russia of her European influence, and establish a Polish nation in her bosom, composed of provinces rent from her own dominions,—would have crowned the undertaking.

The tactics of Napoleon had, by long practice, been pretty well understood, by those studious of military affairs. Barclay de Tolly, whom Alexander had made his generalissimo, a German by birth, a Scotchman by extraction, had laid down and recommended to the Czar, with whom he was in great favour, a plan of foiling Buonaparte upon his own system. He proposed that the Russians should first show only so much opposition on the frontier of their country, as should lay the invaders under the necessity of marching with precaution and leisure; that they should omit no means of annoying their communications, and disturbing the base on which they rested, but should carefully avoid every thing approaching to a general action.[1] On this principle it was pro-

[1] The *base* of military operations is, in stratégie, understood to mean that space of country which every army marching through a hostile territory must keep open and free in the rear, otherwise his main body must necessarily be deprived of its communications, and probably cut off. The base, therefore, contains the supplies and dépôts of the army.

posed to fall back before the invaders, refusing to engage in any other action than skirmishes, and those upon advantage, until the French lines of communication, extended to an immeasurable length, should become liable to be cut off even by the insurgent peasantry. In the mean while, as the French became straitened in provisions, and deprived of recruits and supplies, the Russians were to be reinforcing their army, and at the same time refreshing it. Thus, it was the object of this plan of the campaign not to fight the French forces, until the bad roads, want of provisions, toilsome marches, diseases, and loss in skirmishes, should have deprived the invading army of all its original advantages of numbers, spirit, and discipline. This procrastinating system of tactics suited Russia the better, that her preparations for defensive war were very far from being completed, and that it was important to gain time to receive arms and other supplies from England, as well as, by making peace with the Turks, to obtain the disposal of the large army now engaged upon the Danube.

At the same time it was easy to foresee, that so long a retreat, together with the desolation occasioned to the Russian territory by the presence of an invading army, might wear out the patience of the the Russian soldiery. Some advantageous position was therefore to be selected, and skilfully fortified be-

fore-hand, in which a stand might be made, like that of Lord Wellington in the lines at Torres Vedras. For this purpose a very large fortified camp was prepared at Drissa, on the river Düna, or Dwina, which, supposing the object of the French to have been St Petersburgh, would have been well calculated to cover that capital. On the other hand, were the French to move on Moscow, which proved their final determination, the entrenchments at Drissa were of no importance.

We must speak of the immense hosts combined under Buonaparte, as if they were all constituent parts of one army, although the theatre of war which they occupied was not less than an hundred and twenty French leagues in extent of front.

Macdonald commanded the left wing of the whole French army, which consisted of above 30,000 men: his orders were to penetrate into Courland, and threaten the right flank of the Russians; and, if it were found advisable, to besiege Riga, or at least to threaten that important seaport. The extreme right of Napoleon's army was placed towards Pinsk, in Volhynia, and consisted almost entirely of the Austrian auxiliaries, under Prince Schwartzenberg. They were opposed to the Russian army under General Tormazoff, which had been destined to protect Volhynia. This was a false step of Napoleon, adopted, doubtless, to allay

the irritable jealousy of his ally Austria, on the subject of freeing and restoring the kingdom of Poland. The natives of Volhynia, it must be remembered, are Poles, subjected to the yoke of Russia. Had French troops, or those of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, been sent amongst them, the Volhynians would probably have risen in arms to vindicate their liberty. But they had little temptation to do so when they only saw the Austrians, by whose arms Galicia was yet detained in subjection, and whose Emperor was as liable as Alexander himself to suffer from the resuscitation of Polish independence.

Betwixt the left wing, commanded by Macdonald, and the right under Schwartzenberg, lay the grand French army, divided into three masses. Buonaparte himself moved with his Guards, of which Bessières commanded the cavalry, the Mareschals Lefèbvre and Mortier the infantry. The Emperor had also under his immediate command the corps d'armée, commanded by Davoust, Oudinot, and Ney; which, with the divisions of cavalry, under Grouchy, Montbrun, and Nansouty, amounting, it was computed, to no fewer than two hundred and fifty thousand men, were ready to rush forward and overpower the opposite army of Russians, called the Army of the West. King Jérôme of Westphalia, with the divisions of Junot, Poniatowski, and Régnier,

and the cavalry of Latour Maubourg, forming a mass of about 80,000 men, were destined in the same manner to move forward on the Russian second, or supporting army. Lastly, a central army, under Eugène, the Viceroy of Italy, had it in charge to press between the first and second Russian army, increase their separation, render their junction impossible, and act against either, or both, as opportunity should arise. Such was the disposition of the invading force. Murat, King of Naples, well-known by his old name of *Le beau sabreur*, commanded the whole cavalry of this immense army.

On the other hand, the grand Russian army, commanded by the Emperor in person, and more immediately by Barclay de Tolly, advanced its head-quarters as far as Wilna; not that it was their purpose to defend Lithuania, or its capital, but to oblige the French to manœuvre, and so show their intentions. It amounted to one hundred and twenty thousand men. On the north, towards Courland, this grand army communicated with a division of ten thousand men, under Count Essen; and on the south held communication, but on a line rather too much prolonged, with the second army, under the gallant Prince Bagration, one of the best and bravest of the Russian generals. Platoff, the celebrated Hettman, or Captain-General of the Cossacks, attended

this second army, with twelve thousand of his children of the desert. Independent of these, Bagration's army might amount to eighty thousand men. On the extreme left, and watching the Austrians, from whom perhaps no very vigorous measures were apprehended, was Tormazoff, with what was termed the army of Volhynia, amounting to twenty thousand men. Two armies of reserve were in the course of being formed at Novogorod and Smolensk. They might amount to about 20,000 men each.

Thus, on the whole, the Russians entered upon the campaign with a sum total of two hundred and sixty thousand men, opposed to four hundred and seventy thousand, or with an odds of almost one half against them. But during the course of the war, Russia raised reinforcements of militia and volunteers to greatly more than the balance which was against her at the commencement.

The grand Imperial army marched upon the river Niemen in its three overwhelming masses; the King of Westphalia upon Grodno, the Viceroy of Italy on Pilony, and the Emperor himself on a point called Nagaraiski, three leagues beyond Kowno. When the head of Napoleon's columns reached the river which rolled silently along under cover of immense forests on the Russian side, he advanced in person to reconnoitre the banks, when his

horse stumbled and threw him. « A bad omen, » said a voice, but whether that of the Emperor or one of his suite, could not be distinguished; « a Roman would return. » On the Russian bank appeared only a single Cossack, who challenged the first party of French that crossed the river, and demanded their purpose in the territories of Russia. « To beat you, and to take Wilna, » was the reply. The patrol withdrew, nor was another soldier seen.

A dreadful thunder-storm was the welcome which they received in this wild land; and shortly after the Emperor received intelligence that the Russians were falling back on every side, and manifested an evident intention to evacuate Lithuania without a battle. The Emperor urged forward his columns with even more than his usual promptitude, eager to strike one of those formidable blows by which he was wont to annihilate his enemy at the very commencement of the campaign. This gave rise to an event more ominous than the fall of his horse, or the tempest which received him on the banks of the Niemen. The river Wilia being swollen with rain, and the bridges destroyed, the Emperor, impatient of the obstacle, commanded a body of Polish cavalry to cross by swimming. They did not hesitate to dash into the river. But ere they reached the middle of the stream, the irresist-

ible torrent broke their ranks, and they were swept down and lost almost to a man, before the eyes of Napoleon, to whom some of them in the last struggle turned their faces, exclaiming, « *Vive l'Empereur!* » The spectators were struck with horror. But much greater would that feeling have been, could they have known that the fate of this handful of brave men was but an anticipation of that which impended over the hundreds of thousands, who, high in health and hope, were about to rush upon natural and artificial obstacles, no less formidable and no less insurmountable than the torrent which had swept away their unfortunate advanced guard.

While his immense masses were traversing Lithuania, Napoleon fixed his head-quarters at Wilna, the ancient capital of that province, where he began to experience the first pressure of those difficulties which attended his gigantic undertaking. We must pause to detail them; for they tend to show the great mistake of those who have followed Napoleon himself in supposing, that the Russian expedition was a hopeful and well-conceived plan, which would certainly have proved successful, if not unexpectedly disconcerted by the burning of Moscow, and the severity of the weather, by which the French armies were compelled to retreat into Poland.

We have elsewhere mentioned, that, accord-

ing to Napoleon's usual style of tactics, the French troops set out upon their campaign with bread and biscuit for a few days, and when that was expended (which, betwixt waste and consumption, usually happened before the calculated period), they lived on such supplies as they could collect in the country, by the means of marauding or pillage, which they had converted into a regular system. But Napoleon had far too much experience and prudence to trust, amid the wastes of Russia, to a system of supplies, which had sufficed for maintenance of the army in the rich fields of Austria. He knew well that he was plunging with half a million of men into inhospitable deserts, where Charles XII. could not find subsistence for twenty thousand Swedes. He was aware, besides, of the impolicy there would be in harassing the Lithuanians by marauding exactions. To conciliate them was a great branch of his plan, for Lithuania, in respect to Russia, was a conquered province, into which Napoleon hoped to inspire the same desire of independence which animated Poland, and thus to find friends and allies among the very subjects of his enemy. The utmost exertion of his splendid talents, putting into activity the utmost extent of his unlimited power, had been, therefore, turned towards collecting immense magazines of provisions, and for securing the means of trans-

porting them along with the army. His strong and impassioned genius was, for months before the expedition, directed to this important object, which he pressed upon his generals with the utmost solicitude. « For masses like those we are about to move, if precautions be not taken, the grain of no country can suffice, » he said, in one part of his correspondence.—In another, « All the provision-waggons must be loaded with flour, rice, bread, vegetables, and brandy, besides what is necessary for the hospital service. The result of my movements will assemble four hundred thousand men on a single point. There will be nothing to expect from the country, and it will be necessary to have every thing within ourselves. »

These undeniable views were followed up by preparations, which, abstractedly considered, must be regarded as gigantic. The cars and waggons, which were almost innumerable, destined for the carriage of provisions, were divided into battalions and squadrons. Each battalion of cars was capable of transporting six thousand quintals of flour; each squadron of heavy waggons nearly four thousand eight hundred quintals; besides the immense number dedicated to the service of the engineers and the hospitals, or engaged in transporting besieging materiel and pontoons.

This sketch must convince the reader, that

Napoleon had in his eye, from the outset, the prospect of deficiency in supplying his army with provisions, and that he had bent his mind to the task of overcoming it by timely preparation. But all his precautions proved totally inadequate. It was found a vain attempt, to introduce military discipline amidst the carters and waggon-drivers; and when wretched roads were encumbered with fallen horses and broken carriages, when the soldiers and wain-drivers began to plunder the contents of the cars and waggons which they were appointed to protect and to manage, the confusion became totally inextricable. Very far from reaching Lithuania, where their presence was so essential, few of the heavy waggons ever attained the banks of the Vistula, and almost none proceeded to the Niemen. Weeks and months after the army had passed, some of the light cars and herds of cattle did arrive, but comparatively few in number, and in most miserable plight. The soldiers were, therefore, at the very commencement of the campaign, compelled to have recourse to their usual mode of supplying themselves, by laying contributions on the country; which, while they continued in Poland, the immense fertility of the soil enabled it to supply. But matters became greatly worse after entering Lithuania, which the Russians had previously

endeavoured to strip of all that could benefit the French.

Thus, in the very first march from the Niemen and the Wilia, through a country which was regarded as friendly, and before they had seen an enemy, the immense army of Napoleon were incurring great loss themselves, and doing infinite damage to the country on which they lived at free cost, in spite of all the measures which Buonaparte had devised, and all the efforts he had made to maintain them from their own stores.

This uncertain mode of subsistence was common to the whole army, though its consequences were especially disastrous in particular corps. Ségur[1] informs us, that the

[1] Here and elsewhere we quote, as a work of complete authority, Count Philip de Ségur's account of this memorable expedition. The author is, we have always understood, a man of honour, and his work evinces him to be a man of talent. We have had the opinion of several officers of high character, who had themselves served in the campaign, that although unquestionably there may be some errors among the details, and although in some places the author may have given way to the temptation of working up a description, or producing effect by a dialogue, yet his narrative on the whole is candid, fair, and liberal. The unfriendly criticism of General Gourgaud impeaches Count Ségur's opportunities of knowing the facts he relates, because his duty did not call him into the line of battle, where he might have seen the military events with his own eyes. We conceive with deference, that, as a historian, Count Ségur's situation was more favourable for collecting

armies under Eugène and Davoust were regular in their work of collecting contributions, and distributing them among the soldiers; so that their system of marauding was less bur-

intelligence than if he had been actually engaged. We speak from high authority in saying, that a battle is in one respect like a ball,—every one recollects the next morning the partner with whom he danced, and what passed betwixt them, but none save a bystander can give a general account of the whole party. Now, Count Ségur eminently resembled the bystander in his opportunities of collecting exact information concerning the whole events of the campaign. His duty was to take up and distribute the lodgings at the general head-quarters. It was, therefore, seldom that an officer could go to or return from head-quarters without holding communication with Count Ségur; and, having his plan of a narrative in view, he could not be the man of ability he appears, if he did not obtain from those who arrived at or left head-quarters, such information as they had to communicate. As he had no pressing military duty to perform, he had nothing to prevent his arranging and recording the information he collected; and when General Gourgaud urges the impossibility of the historian's being present at some of the most secret councils, he forgets that many such secrets *percolate* from the cabinet into the better-informed circles around it, even before the seal of secrecy is removed, but especially when, as in the present case, a total change of circumstances renders secrecy no longer necessary. We have only to add, that though the idolatry of Count Ségur towards the Emperor is not sufficient to satisfy his critic, he must in other eyes be considered as an admirer of the late Emperor; and that those who knew the French army will find no reason to suspect him of being a false brother.

densome to the country, and more advantageous to themselves. On the other hand, the Westphalian, and other German auxiliaries, under King Jérôme, having learned the lesson of pillaging from the French, and wanting, according to Ségur, the elegant manner of their teachers, practised the arts they had acquired with a coarse rapacity, which made the French ashamed of their pupils and imitators. Thus the Lithuanians, terrified, alienated, and disgusted, with the injuries they sustained, were far from listening to the promises of Napoleon, or making common cause with him against Russia, who had governed them kindly, and with considerable respect to their own habits and customs.

But this was not the only evil. The direct loss sustained by the French army was very great. In the course of the very first marches from the Niemen and the Wilia, not less than ten thousand horses, and numbers of men, were left dead on the road. Of the young conscripts especially, many died of hunger and fatigue; and there were instances of some who committed suicide, rather than practise the cruel course of pillage by which only they could subsist; and of others, who took the same desperate step, from remorse at having participated in such cruelties. Thousands turned stragglers, and subsisted by robbery. The Duke of Treviso, who followed the march

of the grand army, informed Napoleon, that, from the Niemen to the Wilia, he had seen nothing but ruined habitations abandoned, carriages overturned, broke open and pillaged, corpses of men and horses,—all the horrible appearances, in short, which present themselves in the route of a defeated army.

Those who desired to flatter Buonaparte, ascribed this loss to the storm of rain, which fell at the time they were entering Lithuania. But summer rain, whatever its violence, does not destroy the horses of an army by hundreds and thousands. That which does destroy them, and renders those that survive almost unfit for service during the campaign, and incapable of bearing the hardships of winter is hard work, forced marches, want of corn or dry fodder, and the supporting them on the green crop which is growing in the fields. It was now the season when, of all others, a commander, who values the serviceable condition of his army, will avoid such enterprises as require from his cavalry hard work and forced marches. In like manner, storms of summer rain do not destroy the foot soldiers exposed to them, more than other men; but forced marches on bad roads, and through a country unprovided with shelter, and without provisions, must ruin infantry, since every man, who, from fatigue, or from having straggled too far in quest of food, chances to be

left behind, is left exposed without shelter to the effects of the climate, and if he cannot follow and rejoin his corps, has no resource but to lie down and die.

The provisions of the hospital department had been as precarious as those of the commissariat. Only six thousand patients could be accommodated in the hospitals at Wilna, which is too small a proportion for an army of 400,000 men, even if lying in quarters in a healthy and peaceful country, where one invalid in fifty is a most restricted allowance, but totally inadequate to the numbers which actually required assistance, as well from the maladies introduced by fatigue and bad diet, as by the casualties of war. Although no battle, and scarce a skirmish had been fought, twenty-five thousand patients encumbered the hospitals of Wilna; and the villages were filled with soldiers who were dying for want of medical assistance. The King of Westphalia must be exempted from this general censure; his army was well provided with hospitals, and lost much fewer men than the others. This imperfection of the hospital department was an original defect in the conception of the expedition, and continued to influence it most unfavourably from beginning to end.

Napoleon sometimes repined under these losses and calamities, sometimes tried to remedy them by threats against marauders, and

sometimes endeavoured to harden himself against thought of the distress of his army, as an evil which must be endured, until victory should put an end to it. But repining and anger availed nothing; denunciations against marauders could not reasonably be executed upon men who had no other means of subsistence; and it was impossible to obtain a victory over an enemy who would not risk a battle.

The reader may here put the natural question, Why Buonaparte, when he found the stores, which he considered as essential to the maintenance of his army, had not reached the Vistula, should have passed on, instead of suspending his enterprise until he was provided with those means, which he had all along judged essential to its success? He might in this manner have lost time, but he would have saved his men and horses, and avoided distressing a country which he desired to conciliate. The truth is, that Napoleon had suffered his sound and cooler judgment to be led astray, by strong and ardent desire to finish the war by one brilliant battle and victory. The hope of surprising the Emperor Alexander at Wilna, of defeating his grand army, or at least cutting off some of its principal corps, resembled too much many of his former exploits, not to have captivation for him. For this purpose, and with this expectation, forced marches were to be undertaken, from the

Vistula even to the Dwina and Dnieper; the carts, carriages, cattle, all the supplies brought from France, Italy, and Germany, were left behind, the difficulties of the enterprise forgotten, and nothing thought of but the expectation of finding the enemy at unawares, and totally destroying him at one blow. The fatal consequence of the forced marches we have stated; but what may appear most strange is, that Napoleon, who had recourse to this expeditious and reckless advance, solely to surprise his enemy by an unexpected attack, rather lost than gained that advantage of time, to procure which he had made such sacrifices. This will appear from the following detail:—

The army which had been quartered on the Vistula broke up from thence about the 1st of June, and advanced in different columns, and by forced marches, upon the Niemen, which it reached upon different points, but chiefly near Kowno, upon the 23d, and commenced the passage on the 24th of the same month. From the Vistula to the Niemen is about 250 wersts, equal to two hundred and thirty-five, or two hundred and forty English miles; from Kowno, on the banks of the Niemen, to Vitepsk, on the Dwina, is nearly the same distance. The whole space might be marched by an army, moving with its baggage, in the course of forty marches, at the rate of twelve miles a-day; yet the traversing

this distance took, as we shall presently see, four days more, notwithstanding the acceleration of forced marches, than would have been occupied by an army moving at an ordinary and easy rate, and carrying its own supplies along with its columns. The cause why this overhaste should have been attended with actual delay, was partly owing to the great mass of troops which were to be supplied by the principle of the marauding system, partly to the condition of the country, which was doomed to afford them; and partly, it may be, to the political circumstances which detained Napoleon eighteen precious days at Wilna. The first reason is too obvious to need illustration, as a flying army of twenty thousand men bears comparatively light on the resources of a country, and may be pushed through it in haste; but those immense columns, whose demands were so unbounded, could neither move rapidly, nor have their wants hastily supplied. But, besides, in a country like Lithuania, the march could not be regular, and is was often necessary to suspend the advance; thus losing in some places the time which great exertion had gained in others. Wildernesses and pathless forests were necessarily to be traversed in the utmost haste, as they afforded nothing for the marauders, on whose success the army depended for support. To make amends for this, it was necessary to halt the

troops for one day, or even more, in the rich-est districts, or in the neighbourhood of large towns,* to give leisure and opportunity to recruit their supplies at the expense of the country. Thus the time gained by the forced marches was lost in inevitable delays; and the advance, though attended with such tragic consequences to the soldier, did not secure the advantage which the general proposed to attain.

Upon arriving at Wilna, Napoleon had the mortification to find, that although the Emperor Alexander had not left the place until two days after he had himself crossed the Niemen, yet the Russian retreat had been made with the utmost regularity; all magazines and provisions, which could yield any advantage to the invaders, having been previously destroyed to a very large amount. While Buonaparte's generals had orders to press forward on their traces, the French Emperor himself remained at Wilna, to conduct some political measures, which seemed of the last importance to the events of the campaign.

The Abbé de Pradt had executed with ability the task entrusted to him, of exciting the Poles of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, with the hope of a general restoration of Polish freedom. This brave but unhappy country, destined, it would seem, to spend its blood in every cause but its own, had, in that portion

of it which formerly belonged to Prussia, and now formed the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, gained but little by its nominal independence. This state had only a population of about five millions of inhabitants, yet maintained for the service of France, rather than for its own, an armed force of eighty-five thousand men. Eighteen regiments of these were embodied with the Emperor's army, and paid by France; but the formation and expense of the rest far exceeded the revenues of the Duchy. The last amounted only to forty millions of francs, while the expenses more than doubled that sum. The Grand Duchy had also suffered its full share of distress from the Continental System of Napoleon. The revenue of Poland depends on the sale of the grain which her fertile soil produces; and that grain, in the years previous to the present, had lain rotting in the warehouses. The misery of the poor was extreme; the opulence of the rich classes had disappeared, and they could not relieve them. The year 1811 had been a year of scarcity here as well as elsewhere; and, as in former years the Poles had grain which they could not send to market, so at present they had neither corn nor means to purchase it. To all these disadvantages must be added, the plunder and misery sustained by the Duchy during the march of Buonaparte's numerous forces from the Vistula to the Niemen.

Yet so highly toned is the national patriotism of the Poles, that it kindled at the name of independence, notwithstanding the various accumulated circumstances which tended to damp the flame. When therefore a diet of the Duchy of Warsaw was convened, where the nobles assembled according to ancient form, all were anxious to meet Napoleon's wishes; but an unfortunate hint which the Emperor had thrown out concerning the length of the discourse with which the Diet was to be opened, induced the worthy Count Mathechewitz, whose duty it was to draw up the peroration, to extend it to fifty pages of very close writing.

As all the assembly exclaimed against the prolixity of this mortal harangue, the French ambassador, the Abbé de Pradt, was required to substitute something more suitable for the occasion. Accordingly, he framed a discourse more brief, more in the taste of his own country, and, we doubt not, more spirited and able than that of Count Mathechewitz. It was hailed by the warm and enthusiastic applause of the Diet. Notwithstanding which, when sent to Napoleon, then at Wilna, he disapproved of it, as too obviously written in the French style of composition, and intimated in plain terms, that language like that of an ancient Pole, speaking his national sentiments in

the oriental tropes of his national language, would better have suited the occasion.

The intimation of this dissatisfaction tore the veil from the Abbé de Pradt's eyes, as he himself assures us. He foresaw that the infatuated want of judgment which the Emperor displayed, in disliking his discourse, was that of a doomed and falling man; he dated from that epoch the overthrow of Napoleon's power, and was so much moved with the spirit of prophecy, that he could not withhold his predictions even before the young persons connected with his embassy.

But a more fatal sign of Napoleon's prospects than could be inferred by any except the author, from his disapprobation of the Abbé de Pradt's discourse, occurred in his answer to the address of the Diet of the Grand Duchy.

The Diet of Warsaw, anticipating, as they supposed, Napoleon's wishes, had declared the whole kingdom, in all its parts, free and independent, as if the partition treaties had never existed; and no just-thinking person will doubt their right to do so. They entered into a general confederation, declared the kingdom of Poland restored, summoned all Poles to quit the service of Russia, and finally, sent deputations to the Grand Duke and the King of Saxony, and another to Napoleon, announcing

their desire to accelerate the political regeneration of Poland, and their hope to be recognized by the entire Polish nation as the centre of a general union. The expressions addressed to Napoleon were in a tone of idolatry. They applied for the countenance of the « Hero who dictated his history to the age, in whom resided the force of Providence,» language which is usually reserved to the Deity alone. « Let the Great Napoleon,» they said, « only pronounce his fiat that the kingdom of Poland should exist, and it will exist accordingly. The natives of Poland will unite themselves at once and unanimously to the service of him to whom ages are as a moment, and space no more than a point.» In another case, this exaggerated eloquence would have induced some suspicion of sincerity on the part of those who used it; but the Poles, like the Gascons, to whom they have been compared, are fond of superlatives, and of an exalted and enthusiastic tone of language, which, however, they have in all ages been observed to support by their actions in the field.

The answer of Buonaparte to this high-toned address was unexpectedly cold, doubtful, and indecisive. It was at this moment, probably, he felt the pressure of his previous engagements with Austria, which prevented his at once acquiescing in the wishes of the Polish mission. « He loved the Polish nation,» he

said, « and in the situation of the Diet at Warsaw, would act as they did. But he had many interests to reconcile, and many duties to fulfil. Had he reigned when Poland was subjected to those unjust partitions which had deprived her of independence, he would have armed in her behalf, and as matters stood, when he conquered Warsaw and its surrounding territories, he instantly restored them to a state of freedom. - - - He applauded what they had done—authorized their future efforts, and would do all he could to second their resolution. If their efforts were unanimous, they might compel their oppressors to recognize their rights, but these hopes must rest on the exertions of the population.» These uncertain and cool assurances of his general interest in the Polish cause were followed by the express declaration, « That he had guaranteed to the Emperor of Austria the integrity of his dominions, and he could not sanction any manœuvre, or the least movement, tending to disturb the peaceable possession of what remained to *him* of the Polish provinces. As for the provinces of Poland attached to Russia, he was content with assuring them, that providing they were animated by the spirit evinced in the Grand Duchy, Providence would crown their good cause with success.»

This answer, so different from that which the Poles had expected, struck the mission

with doubt and dismay. Instead of countenancing the re-union of Poland, Napoleon had given an assurance, that, in the case of Galicia, he neither could nor would interfere to detach that province from Austria; and in that of the Polish provinces attached to Russia, he exhorted the natives to be unanimous, in which case, instead of assuring them of his powerful assistance, he was content with recommending them to the care of that Providence, in whose place the terms of their bombastic address had appeared to instal Napoleon himself. The Poles accordingly began from that period to distrust the intentions of Napoleon towards the re-establishment of their independence, the more so, as they observed that neither Polish nor French troops were employed in Volhynia or elsewhere, whose presence might have given countenance to their efforts, but Austrians only, who, for example's sake, were as unwilling to encourage the Russian provinces of Poland to declare for the cause of independence, as they would have been to preach the same doctrines in those which belonged to Austria.

Napoleon afterwards often and bitterly regretted the sacrifice which he made on this occasion to the wishes of Austria; and he had the more occasion for this regret, as the error seemed to be gratuitous. It is true, that to have pressed Austria on the subject of eman-

cipating Polish Galicia, might have had the effect of throwing her into the arms of Russia; but this might probably have been avoided by the cession of the Illyrian provinces as an indemnity. And, if this exchange could not be rendered acceptable to Austria, by throwing in Trieste, or even Venice, Napoleon ought then to have admitted the impossibility of reinstating the independence of Poland, to have operated as a reason for entirely declining the fatal war with Russia.

The French ruler miscarried also in an effort to excite an insurrection in Lithuania, although he named a provisional government in the province, and declared the country was free of the Russian yoke. But the Lithuanians, a colder people than the Poles, were not in general much dissatisfied with the government of Russia, while the conduct of the French armies in their territories alienated their minds from Napoleon. They observed also the evasive answer which he returned to the Poles, and concluded, that if the French Emperor should have occasion to make peace with Alexander, he would not hesitate to do so at the expense of those whom he was now encouraging to rise in insurrection. Thus the moral effect which Napoleon expected to produce on the Russian frontier was entirely checked and counteracted; insomuch, that of a guard of honour, which the Lithuanians had

proposed to serve for the Emperor's person, only three troopers ever made their appearance on parade. Nor did the country at large take any steps, either generally or individually, to intimate a national interest in the events of the war, seeming to refer themselves entirely to the course of events.

CHAPTER IX.

Proceedings of the Army under Prince Bagration—Napoleon's manœuvres against him—King Jerome of Westphalia is disgraced for alleged inactivity—Bagration is defeated by Davoust, but succeeds in gaining the interior of Russia, and re-establishing his communication with the Grand Army—which retreats to Drissa—Barclay and Bagration meet at Smolensk on the 20th July—The French Generals become anxious that Napoleon should close the Campaign at Vitepsk for the season—He persists in proceeding—Manœuvres of both Armies in regard to Smolensk—It is evacuated by De Tolly, after setting fire to the place—Reduced condition of the French, and growing strength of the Russian Armies—Peace effected between Russia, and England, Sweden, and Turkey.—Napoleon resolves to advance upon Moscow

NAPOLEON continued to occupy his head-quarters at Wilna, from 28th June to 16th July, the space of eighteen days. It was not usual with him to make such long halts; but Wilna was his last point of communication with Europe, and he had probably much to arrange ere he could plunge into the forests and deserts of Russia, whence all external intercourse must

be partial and precarious. He named Maret, Duke of Bassano, Governor of Lithuania, and placed under the management of that minister the whole charge of correspondence with Paris and with the armies; thus rendering him the centre of administrative, political, and even military communication between the Emperor and his dominions.

It must not be supposed, however, that these eighteen days passed without military movements of high importance. The reader must remember that the grand army of Russia was divided into two unequal portions. That commanded under the Emperor by Barclay de Tolly had occupied Wilna and the vicinity, until the French entered Lithuania, when, by a preconcerted and well-executed retreat, they fell back on their strong fortified camp at Drissa. The smaller army, under Prince Bagration, was much farther advanced to the south-westward, and continued to occupy a part of Poland. The prince's head-quarters were at Wolkowisk; Platoff, with seven thousand Cossacks, lay at Grodno, and both he and Bagration maintained communication with the main army through its left wing, which, under Dorokhoff, extended as far as Lida. The army of Bagration had been posted thus far to the south-west, in order that when Napoleon crossed the Niemen, this army might be placed in his rear as he advanced to Wilna. To exe-

cute this plan became impossible, so much greater was the invading army than the Russians had anticipated. On the contrary, the French were able to protect the flank of their advance against Wilna by an army of 30,000 men, under the King of Westphalia, placed betwixt them and this secondary Russian army. And far from having it in his power to annoy the enemy, Bagration was placed so much in advance as greatly to hazard being separated from the main body, and entirely cut off. The Russian prince accordingly had directions from Barclay de Tolly to get his army out of their perilous situation; and again, on the 13th of July, he had orders from Alexander to move on the camp of Drissa.

When Napoleon arrived at Wilna, the danger of Bagration became imminent; for the entrenched camp at Drissa was the rendezvous of all the Russian corps, and Napoleon being 150 wersts, or seven days' march, nearer to Drissa than Bagration, neither Napoleon nor any other general had ever so fair an opportunity for carrying into execution the French Emperor's favourite manœuvre, of dividing into two the line of his enemy, which was unquestionably too much extended.

It was the 30th of July ere Napoleon was certain of the advantage which he possessed, and he hastened to improve it. He had dispatched the greater part of his cavalry under

Murat, to press on the retreat of the grand Russian army; the second corps under Oudinot, and the third under Ney, with three divisions of the first corps, were pushed towards the Dwina on the same service, and constituted a force too strong for the army of Barclay de Tolly to oppose. On the right of the army, the King of Westphalia had directions to press upon Bagration in front, and throw him upon the army of Davoust, which was to advance on his flank and towards his rear. It was concluded, that Bagration, cut off from the grand army, and attacked at once by Jérôme and Davoust, must necessarily surrender or be destroyed.

Having thus detached very superior forces against the only two Russian armies which were opposed to him, Buonaparte himself, with the Guards, the army of Italy, the Bavarian army, and three divisions of Davoust's corps d'armée, was at liberty to have marched forward upon Vitepsk, occupying the interval between the corps of Murat, who pressed upon Alexander and De Tolly, and of Davoust, who was pursuing Bagration. By thus pressing on where there was no hostile force opposed to him, Napoleon might have penetrated between the two Russian armies, to each of whom a superior force was opposed, might have forced himself between them and occupied Vitepsk, and threatened both St Peters-

burgh and Moscow; or, if he decided for the latter capital, might have advanced as far as Smolensk. That Buonaparte formed this plan of the campaign on the 10th of July at Wilna, we are assured by Ségur; but it was then too late for putting it in execution--yet another week was lost at Wilna. All seem to have been sensible of an unusual slowness in Napoleon's motions on this important occasion; and Ségur attributes it to a premature decay of constitution, of which, however, we see no traces in the campaigns of 1813 and 1814. But the terrible disorder of an army, the sick and stragglers of which absolutely filled Lithuania, and that army one of such immense size, required considerable time to remodel and new-organize it; and this of itself, a misfortune inherent in the enterprise, is sufficient to account for the halt at Wilna.

Meantime Bagration, in a precarious situation, defended himself with the greatest skill and gallantry. Being cut off from the direct road to Drissa, it was his object to retreat eastward to his rear, instead of moving northward by his right flank, and thus to make his way towards the Dwina, either through Ostrowno and Minsk, or by the town of Borizoff. When he gained the Dwina, Bagration trusted to form a junction with the grand army, from which he was now so fearfully separated. The actual strength of his army was, however, ni-

creased not only by the Hettman Platoff with his Cossacks, who, being advanced south-westward as far as Grodno, made in fact a part of Bagration's command, and assisted him materially in his retreat; but also by the division of General Dorokhof, which, forming the extreme left of the grand Russian army, was cut off in the retreat upon Drissa by the advance of the French, and therefore had been placed also in communication with Bagration. So that, numerically, the prince might have under his command from forty to fifty thousand men.

The ground which Bagration had to traverse was the high plain of Lithuania, where arise the sources of the rivers which take different directions to the Black and Baltic Seas. The soil is unusually marshy, and traversed by long causeways, which the Russians made use of in defending themselves against the attacks of Jérôme's advanced guard. But while Bagration struggled against the attempt on his front, Davoust, having occupied all the posts on the Russian's right flank, and succeeded in preventing him taking the shortest road to Drissa, began next to cut him off from his more circuitous route to the east, occupying the town of Minsk, and the defiles by which Bagration must issue from Lithuania towards Vitepsk and the Dwina. The occupation of Minsk greatly embarrassed the retreat of Bagration; insomuch, that the French were of opinion

that it was only the want of skill and enterprise on the part of King Jérôme of Westphalia, who did not, it was said, press the Russians with sufficient vigour, that prevented the Russian prince being thrust back on Davoust, and totally destroyed. At any rate, Jérôme, whether guilty or not of the alleged slowness of movement, was, according to the fashion in which the chief of the Napoleon dynasty treated the independent princes whom he called to sovereignty, sent back in disgrace to his Westphalian dominions, unaccompanied even by a soldier of his guards, for all of whom Napoleon had sufficient employment.

Several skirmishes were fought between the corps of Bagration, and those opposed to it, of which the event was dubious. Platoff and his Cossacks had more than one distinguished success over the Polish cavalry, who, with all their fiery courage, had not yet the intimate acquaintance with partisan war, which seems to be a natural attribute of the modern Scythians. In the mean while, Bagration, continuing his attempts at extricating his army, made another circuitous march towards the south, and, avoiding his pursuers, he effected the passage of the Beresina at Bobruisk. The Dnieper (anciently the Borysthenes) was the next obstacle to be overcome, and with a view to regain the ground he had lost, Bagration ascended that stream as far as Mohiloff. Here

he found himself again anticipated by Davoust, who was equally, though less unpleasantly surprised, by finding himself in front of Bagration, who prepared to clear his way by the sword. The combat was at first advantageous to the Russians, but they were at length repulsed roughly, and lost the battle; without, however, suffering much, except in the failure of their purpose. Disappointed in this attempt, Bagration, with unabated activity, once more altered his line of retreat, descended the Dnieper so far as to reach Nevoi-Bikoff, finally crossed at that point, and thus gained the interior of Russia, and an opportunity of again placing himself in communication with the grand Russian army, from which he had been so nearly cut off.

It was certainly a new event in the history of Napoleon's wars, that two large armies of French should be baffled and outmanœuvred by a foreign general. And yet this was clearly the case; for, admitting that the Russians committed originally the great error of extending their line too far from Drissa, the intended point of union, and although, in consequence, the army of Bagration run great risk of being cut off, yet the manœuvres by which he effectually eluded the enemy showed superior military talent on the part of the general, as well as excellent discipline on that of the soldiers, and were sufficient for the extrication of both.

We return to the grand army, commanded by the Emperor, or rather by Barclay de Tolly, which, though pressed by Murat, at the head of the greater part of the French cavalry, as well as by Oudinot and Ney, all burning for combat, made a regular and successful retreat to the entrenched camp at Drissa, where the Russian army had been appointed to concentrate itself. The French troops, on their part, approached the left bank of the Dwina, and that river now separated the hostile armies, and there took place only partial actions between detached corps with various success. But the Russian general Witgenstein, whose name began to be distinguished both for enterprise and conduct, observing that Sébastiani's van-guard of French cavalry had quartered themselves with little precaution in the town of Drissa, he passed the river unexpectedly on the night of the 2d July, beat up Sébastiani's quarters, and was completely successful in the skirmish which ensued. Enterprises of this sort show a firm and energetic character, and Napoleon began already to be aware of the nature of the task he had before him, and of the necessity of employing his own talents in the campaign.

In the mean time, Barclay was led to change his plan, from learning the danger to which Prince Bagration was exposed. The camp at Drissa became too distant a point of junction,

and there was every risk that the whole body of the French army, which was now getting itself into motion, would force a passage across the Dwina at Vitepsk, a good deal higher up than Drissa, and thus at once turn Barclay's left flank, and entirely separate him from Bagration and his corps d'armée. Alarmed at this prospect, Barclay evacuated the camp, and began to ascend the right side of the Dwina, by Polotsk, towards Vitepsk. This line of movement converged with that of Bagration's retreat, and served essentially to favour the desired junction of the two Russian armies. Witgenstein was left near Drissa to observe the enemy, and cover the road to St Petersburgh. The army first arrived at Polotsk, when the Emperor Alexander left the troops, and hastened to Moscow, to recommend and enforce energetic measures, and solicit the heavy sacrifices which the emergency demanded. Barclay continued his march upon Vitepsk, hoping to get into communication with Bagration, to whom he had sent orders, directing him to descend the Dnieper as far as Oresa (or Orcha), which is about fifty-six wersts from Vitepsk.

At this period, Napoleon was directing his whole reserved forces upon the same point of Vitepsk, with a purpose as anxious to prevent the junction of the two Russian armies, as that of Barclay to accomplish that important move-

ment. Had Napoleon's march commenced earlier, there can be no doubt that he must have attained the disputed position sooner by marching from Wilna, than Barclay could have reached it by ascending the Dwina from Drissa. Hasting from Wilna upon the 4th, he might easily have reached Vitepsk on the 20th, and would then have found himself, with a chosen army of 120,000 men, without an enemy on his front, posted between the two hostile armies, each of which was pressed by a force superior to their own, and having their flanks and communications at his mercy. Instead of this advantageous condition, the Emperor found himself in front of the grand army of Russia, in a situation where they could not easily be brought to action, although severe and bloody skirmishes took place between the cavalry on both sides.

On his part, Barclay was far from easy. He heard nothing of Bagration, whom he expected to approach from Orsa; and, rather than abandon him to his fate by a retreat, he formed, on the 14th July, the almost desperate resolution of risking a general action with very superior forces, commanded by Napoleon. But just as he had made his dispositions for battle, the Russian general received news from one of the prince's aides-de-camp, which made him joyfully alter his determination. The repulse at Mohiloff had, as before noticed,

obliged Bagration to change his line of retreat, which was now directed upon Smolensk. Barclay, renouncing instantly his purpose of battle, commenced a retreat upon the same point, and arriving at Smolensk on the 20th, was joined by Bagration within two days after. The result of these manœuvres had been on the whole disappointing to the Emperor of the French. The two armies of Russians had united without material loss, and placed themselves upon their own lines of communication. No battle had been fought and won; and although Napoleon obtained possession of the fortified camp at Drissa, and afterwards of Vitepsk, it was only as positions which it no longer served the enemy's purpose to retain.

The marshals and generals who surrounded Napoleon began to wish and hope that he would close at Vitepsk the campaign of the season, and, quartering his troops on the Dwina, await supplies, and the influence of the invasion upon the mind of the Russian nation, till next spring. But this suggestion Buonaparte treated with contempt, asking those who favoured such a sentiment, whether they thought he had come so far only to conquer a parcel of wretched huts. If ever, therefore, he had seriously thought of settling his winter-quarters at Vitepsk, which Ségur affirms, and Gourgaud positively denies, it had been but a passing purpose. Indeed, his pride must have

revolted at the very idea of fortifying himself with entrenchments and redoubts in the middle of summer, and confessing his weakness to Europe, by stopping short in the midst of a campaign, in which he had lost one-third of the active part of his great army, without even having fought a general action, far less won a decisive victory.

Meanwhile the Russians, finding their two wings united, to the number of 120,000, were not inclined to remain inactive. The French army at Vitepsk lay considerably more dispersed than their own, and their plan was, by moving suddenly upon Napoleon, to surprise him ere his army could be concentrated. With this view, General Barclay directed the march of a great part of the grand army upon Rudneia, a place about half-way between Vitepsk and Smolensk, being nearly the centre of the French line of position. Their march commenced on the 26th July; but, on the next day, Barclay received information from the out-posts, which induced him to conclude that Napoleon was strengthening his left flank for the purpose of turning the Russian right wing, and assaulting the town of Smolensk in their rear. To prevent this misfortune, Barclay suspended his march in front, and began by a flank movement to extend his right wing, for the purpose of covering Smolensk. This error, for such it was, led to his advanced guard, who had not

been informed of the change of plan, being placed in some danger at Inkowo, a place about two wersts from Rudneia. Platoff, however, had the advantage in the cavalry skirmish which took place. The Russian general, in consequence of the extension of his flank, discovered that there was no French force on the left, and consequently, that he was in no danger on that point; and he resumed his original plan of pressing the French at Rudneia. But while Barclay lost four days in these fruitless marches and countermarches, he at length learned, that the most speedy retreat towards Smolensk would be necessary to save him from that disaster which he had truly apprehended, though he mistook the quarter from which the danger was to come.

While Barclay was in hopes of surprising Napoleon, the Emperor had laid a scheme of a singularly audacious character, for inflicting the surprise with which he had been himself threatened. Without allowing his purpose to be suspended by the skirmishing on his front, he resolved entirely to change his line of operations from Vitepsk upon the Dwina, to concentrate his army on the Dnieper, making Orcsa the central point of his operations, and thus, turning the left of the Russians instead of their right, as Barclay had apprehended, he hoped to gain the rear of their forces, occupy Smolensk, and act upon their lines of communica-

tion with Moscow. With this purpose Napoleon withdrew his forces from Vitepsk, and the line of the Dwina, with equal skill and rapidity, and, by throwing four bridges over the Dnieper, effected a passage for Ney, the Viceroy, and Davoust. The King of Naples accompanied them, at the head of two large corps of cavalry. Poniatowski, with Junot, advanced by different routes to support the movement. Ney and Murat, who commanded the vanguard, droveevery thing before them until they approached Krasnoi, upon 14th August, where a remarkable action took place. This manœuvre, which transferred the Emperor's line of operations from the Dwina to the Dnieper, has been much admired by French and Russian tacticians, but it has not escaped military criticism.[1]

General Newerowskoi had been stationed at Krasnoi with above six thousand men, a part of the garrison of Smolensk, which had been sent out for the purpose of making a strong recognizance. But finding himself attacked by a body of infantry stronger than his own, and no less than eighteen thousand cavalry besides, the Russian general commenced his retreat upon the road to Smolensk. The ground through which the road lay was open, flat, and favourable for the action of cavalry. Murat,

[1] See Appendix to this volume, No. I.

who led the pursuit, and, while he affected the dress and appearance of a cavalier of romance, had the fiery courage necessary to support the character, sent some of his light squadrons to menace the front of the Russian corps, while with his heavy horse he annoyed their flanks or thundered upon their rear. To add to the difficulties of the Russians, their columns consisted of raw troops, who had never been under fire, and who might have been expected to shrink from the furious onset of the cavalry. They behaved bravely, however, and availed themselves of a double row of trees, which borders the high road to Smolensk on each side, to make their musketry effectual, and to screen themselves from the repeated charges. Protecting themselves as they retreated by a heavy fire, Newerowskoi made good a lion-like retreat into Smolensk, having lost four hundred men, chiefly by the artillery, and five guns, but receiving from friend and foe the testimony due to a movement so bravely and ably conducted.

Upon the 14th of August, the same day with this skirmish, Napoleon arrived at Rasassina, upon the Dnieper, and continued during the 15th to press forward towards Smolensk, in the rear of Ney and Murat. Prince Bagration, in the mean time, threw General Raefskoi into Smolensk, with a strong division, to reinforce Newerowskoi, and advanced himself to the

Dnieper, along the left bank of which he pressed with all possible speed towards the endangered town. Barclay de Tolly was now made aware, as we have already stated, that while he was engaged in false manœuvres to the right, his left had been in fact turned, and that Smolensk was in the utmost danger. Thus the two Russian generals pressed forward from different points to the relief of the city, whilst Napoleon used every effort to carry the place before their arrival.

Smolensk, a town of consequence in the empire, and, like Moscow, honoured by the appellation of the Sacred, and of the Key of Russia, contains about 12,600 inhabitants. It is situated on the heights of the left bank of the Dnieper, and was then surrounded by fortifications of the ancient Gothic character. An old wall, in some places dilapidated, was defended by about thirty towers, which seemed to flank the battlements; and there was an ill-contrived work, called the Royal Bastion, which served as a species of citadel. The walls, however, being eighteen feet thick, and twenty-five high, and there being a ditch of some depth, the town, though not defensible if regularly approached, might be held out against a *coup-de-main*. The greatest inconvenience arose from the suburbs of the place, which, approaching near to the wall of the town, preserved the assailants from the

fire of the besieged, as they approached it. Raefskoi prepared to defend Smolensk at the head of about sixteen thousand men. He was reinforced on the 16th of August by a division of grenadiers under Prince Charles of Mecklenberg, who were detached for that purpose by Bagration.

Ney arrived first under the walls of the city, and instantly rushed forward to attack the citadel. He failed entirely, being himself wounded, and two-thirds of the storming party cut off. A second attempt was made to as little purpose, and at length he was forced to confine his efforts to a cannonade, which was returned from the place with equal spirit. Later in the day, the troops of Napoleon appeared advancing from the eastward on one side of the Dnieper, while almost at the same moment there were seen upon the opposite bank clouds of dust enveloping long columns of men, moving from different points with uncommon celerity. This was the grand army of Russia under Barclay, and the troops of Bagration, who, breathless with haste and anxiety, were pressing forward to the relief of Smolensk.

« At length, » said Napoleon, as he gazed on the advance from the opposite side, « at length I have them! » He had no doubt it was the purpose of the Russians to pass through the city, and, deploying from its gates, to offer

him under the walls that general action for which he longed, and on which so much depended. He took all the necessary measures for preparing his line of battle.

But the cautious Barclay de Tolly was determined, that not even for the protection of the sacred city would he endanger the safety of his army, so indispensably necessary to the defence of the empire. He dismissed to Ellnia his more impatient coadjutor, Prince Bagration, who would willingly have fought a battle, incensed as he was at beholding the cities of Russia sacked, and her fields laid waste, without the satisfaction either of resistance or revenge. Barclay in the mean while occupied Smolensk, but only for the purpose of covering the flight of the inhabitants, and emptying the magazines.

Buonaparte's last look that evening was on the still empty fields betwixt his army and Smolensk. There was no sign of any advance from its gates, and Murat prophesied that the Russians had no purpose of fighting. Davoust entertained a different opinion; and Napoleon, continuing to believe what he most wished, expected with the peep of day to see the whole Russian army drawn up betwixt his own front and the walls of Smolensk. Morning came, however, and the space in which he expected to see the enemy was vacant as before. On the other hand, the high-road on

the opposite side of the Dnieper was filled with troops and artillery, which showed that the grand army of the Russians was in full retreat. Disappointed and incensed, Napoleon appointed instant measures to be taken to storm the place, resolving as speedily as possible to possess himself of the town, that he might have the use of its bridge in crossing to the other side of the Dnieper, in order to pursue the fugitive Russians. There are moments when men of ordinary capacity may advise the wisest. Murat remarked to Buonaparte, that as the Russians had retired, Smolensk, left to its fate, would fall without the loss that must be sustained in an attack by storm, and he more than hinted the imprudence of penetrating farther into Russia at this late season of the year. The answer of Napoleon must have been almost insulting; for Murat, having exclaimed that a march to Moscow would be the destruction of the army, spurred his horse like a desperate man to the banks of the river, where the Russian guns from the opposite side were cannonading a French battery, placed himself under a tremendous fire, as if he had been courting death, and was with difficulty forced from the dangerous spot.

Meantime the attack commenced on Smolensk, but the place was defended with the same vigour as on the day before. The field-

guns were found unable to penetrate the walls; and the French lost four or five thousand men in returning repeatedly to the attack. But this successful defence did not alter Barclay's resolution of evacuating the place. It might no doubt have been defended for several days more, but the Russian general feared that a protracted resistance on this advanced point might give Napoleon time to secure the road to Moscow, and drive the Russian armies back upon the barren and exhausted provinces of the north-west, besides getting betwixt them and the ancient capital of Russia. In the middle of the night, then, while the French were throwing some shells into the place, they saw fires beginning to kindle, far faster and more generally than their bombardment could have occasioned. They were the work of the Russian troops, who, having completed their task of carrying off or destroying the magazines, and having covered the flight of the inhabitants, had now set the dreadful example of destroying their own town, rather than that its houses or walls should afford assistance to the enemy.

When the Frenchmen entered Smolensk, which they did the next morning, 18th August, most of the town, which consisted chiefly of wooden houses, was yet blazing—elsewhere they found nothing but blood and ashes. The French troops were struck with

horror at the inveterate animosity of the Russians, and the desperation of the resistance which they met with; and all began to wish a period to a war, where there was nothing to be gained from the retreating enemy, except a long vista of advance through an inhospitable wilderness of swamps, pine-forests, and deserts; without provisions, and without shelter; without hospitals for the sick, and dressings for the wounded; and without even a shed where the weary might repose, or the wounded might die.

Buonaparte himself hesitated, and is reported to have then spoken of concluding the campaign at Smolensk, which would, he said, be an admirable head of cantonments. « Here, » he said, « the troops might rest and receive reinforcements. Enough was done for the campaign. Poland was conquered, which seemed a sufficient result for one year. The next year they would have peace, or they would seek it at Moscow. » But in the interior of his councils, he held a different language, and endeavoured to cover, with the language of prudence, the pride and pertinacity of character, which forbade him to stop short in an enterprise which had yet produced him no harvest of renown. He stated to his generals the exhausted state of the country, in which his soldiers were living from hand to mouth; and the risk and difficulty of draw-

ing his supplies from Dantzic or Poland, through Russian roads, and in the winter season. He alleged the disorganized state of the army, which might move on, though it was incapable of stopping. « Motion, » he said, « might keep it together; a halt or a retreat would be at once to dissolve it. It was an army of attack, not of defence; an army of operation, not of position. The result was, they must advance on Moscow, possess themselves of the capital, and there dictate a peace. »

The language which Ségur has placed in the mouth of the Emperor by no means exaggerates the dreadful condition of the French army. When Napoleon entered the country, only six weeks before, the corps which formed his operating army amounted to two hundred and ninety-seven thousand men; and by the 5th August, when preparing to break up from Vitepsk, that number was diminished to one hundred and eighty-five thousand, not two-thirds of their original number, and a great additional loss had been sustained in the movements and encounters on the Dnieper. The wounded of the army were in the most miserable state, and it was in vain that the surgeons tore up their own linen for dressings; they were obliged to use parchment, and the down that grows on the birch trees: it is no wonder that few recovered.

Thus it may be concluded, that this rash

enterprise carried with it, from the beginning, the seeds of destruction, which, even without the conflagration of Moscow, or the Russian climate, though the latter must have been at all events included, made the expedition resemble that of Cambyses into Egypt; of Crassus, and after him Julian, into Parthia; and so many others of the same character, where the extent of preparation only rendered the subsequent fate of the invaders more signally calamitous.

While the French army was thus suffering a gradual or rather hasty decay, that of the Russians was now receiving rapid reinforcements. The Emperor Alexander, on leaving the army for Moscow, had convoked the nobles and the merchants of that capital in their several assemblies, had pledged to them his purpose never to make peace while a Frenchman remained in Russia, and had received the most enthusiastic assurances from both ranks of the state, of their being devoted to his cause with life and property. A large sum was voted by the merchants as a general tax; besides which, they opened a voluntary subscription, which produced great supplies. The nobility offered a levy of ten men in the hundred through all their estates; many were at the sole expense of fitting out and arming their recruits, and some of these wealthy boyards furnished companies, nay battalions,

entirely at their own expense. The word peace was not mentioned, or only thought of as that which could not be concluded with an invader, without an indelible disgrace to Russia.

Other external circumstances occurred, which greatly added to the effect of these patriotic exertions.

A peace with England, and the restoration of commerce, was the instant consequence of war with France. Russia had all the support which British diplomacy could afford her, in operating a reconciliation with Sweden, and a peace with Turkey. The former being accomplished, under the mediation of England, and the Crown Prince being assured in possession of Norway, the Russian army under General Steigenteil, or Steingel, which was, while Bernadotte's amicable disposition might be doubted, necessarily detained in Finland, was now set at liberty, for the more pressing service of defending the empire.

A peace, even still more important, was made with the Turks at Bucharest, on the 16th May. The Porte yielded up to Russia, Bessarabia, and that part of Moldavia situated on the left of the river Pruth, and Russia renounced all claim to the rest of the two provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia. But the great advantage which accrued to Russia by this treaty, was its setting at liberty a veteran army of

forty-five thousand men, and rendering them a disposable force in the rear of the French troops.

If the able statesman, who at that period conducted the foreign affairs of Great Britain,[1] had never rendered to his own country and to the world, any other service than the influence which he successfully exercised in these important diplomatic affairs, he must have gone down to posterity as the minister, who had foreseen and provided, in the most critical moment, the mode of strengthening Russia to combat with her formidable invaders, and which, after all her exertions, was the means of turning the balance in her favour.

It was at Vitepsk that Napoleon learned that the Turks had made peace; and as it had only instigated him to precipitate his measures against Smolensk, so now the same reason urged him to continue his march on Moscow. Hitherto his wings had the advantage of the enemy. Macdonald, in blockading Riga, kept all Courland at his disposal, and alarmed St Petersburgh. More to the south, Saint-Cyr had some hard fighting with Witgenstein, and after a severe battle at Polotsk, had reduced that enterprising officer to the defensive.

Equally favourable intelligence had reached from Volhynia, the extreme right of the ter-

[1] Lord Castlereagh

rible line of invasion. The Russian General Tormazoff had made, when least expected, his appearance in the Grand Duchy, driven before him Régnier, who was covering that part of Poland, destroyed a Saxon brigade, and alarmed Warsaw. But Régnier united himself with the Austrian general Schwartzenberg, advanced on Tormasoff, and engaging him near a place called Gorodeczna, defeated him with loss, and compelled him to retreat. It was obvious, however, that the advantage of these two victories at Polotsk and Gorodeczna would be entirely lost, if General Steingel, with the Finland army, should join Witgenstein, while Tormazoff fell back on the Moldavian army of Russia, commanded by Admiral Tchitchagoff.

For Napoleon to await in cantonments at Smolensk, in a wasted country, the consequences of these junctions, which were likely to include the destruction of his two wings, would have been a desperate resolution. It seemed waiting for the fate which he had been wont to command. To move forward was a bold measure. But the French army, in its state of disorganization, somewhat resembled an intoxicated person, who possesses the power to run, though he is unable to support himself if he stand still. If Napoleon could yet strike a gallant blow at the Russian grand army; if he could yet obtain possession of Moscow the Holy, he reckoned on sending dismay into the

heart of Alexander, and dictating to the Czar, as he had done to many other princes, the conditions of peace from within the walls of his own palace. Buonaparte, therefore, resolved to advance upon Moscow. And perhaps, circumstanced as he was, he had no safer course, unless he had abandoned his whole undertaking, and fallen back upon Poland; which would have been an acknowledgment of defeat that we can hardly conceive his stooping to, while he was yet at the head of an army.

CHAPTER X.

Napoleon detaches Murat and other Generals in pursuit of the Russians.—Bloody, but indecisive Action, at Valoutina.—Barclay de Tolly's defensive system relinquished, and Kutousoff appointed to the chief command of the Russian Army.—Napoleon advances from Smolensk.—Battle of Borodino fought, on 5th September.—Victory remains with the French, but without affording them any essential service.—Prince Bagration among the slain.—Kutousoff retreats upon Mojaisk, and thence upon Moscow.—Napoleon continues his advance on the 12th.—Count Rostopchin, Governor of Moscow—His Character.—The Russians abandon Moscow, which is evacuated by the Inhabitants, after the removal of the Archives and Public Treasures, and the emptying of the Magazines.—On the 14th September, the Grand Russian Army marches through Moscow —Last public Court of Justice held there by Rostopchin, after which he follows the march of the Army

WITHOUT communicating his purpose of advancing in person from Smolensk, and completing, without any interval of delay, his great undertaking, Napoleon failed not to detach Murat, Ney, Junot, and Davoust, in pursuit of the Russians, as they retired from Smolensk.

Either, however, his own mind was not made up, or he did not wish his purpose of going onward to be known. He represented this demonstration as arising merely out of the desire of pressing the Russian retreat, though in fact it was preliminary to his own advance.

Barclay de Tolly having performed the stern duty of burning Smolensk, had retired for two or three miles along the road to St Petersburgh, which route he chose in order to avoid a cannonade from the left side of the Dnieper. Having proceeded a little way in this direction, he turned southward to regain the road to Moscow, which he would have taken at first, but for its exposing him to loss from the enemy's artillery, where it bordered on the river. The French could not for some time determine on which route they were to pursue the Russians. At length, finding the track, they overtook the rear-guard at a place called Valoutina, encumbered as it was with guns and baggage. Here a desperate action took place, the Russians reinforcing their rear-guard as fast as the French brought new bodies to attack them. Both parties fought most obstinately, and the distinguished French general Gudin was mortally wounded. The French blamed Junot, who, having been dispatched across the Dnieper, showed no alertness in advancing to charge the enemy. [illegible] was seen, indeed, in this affair of Valoutina, or Lombino,

that the marshals and the great officers who had been accustomed each to command a separate corps d'armée, disdained to receive either orders, or even advice or hints, from a brother of the same rank. Wherever there were two or three of these dignitaries on the field, it was necessary Buonaparte should be within reach, to issue the necessary orders; for no voice save that of the Emperor was implicitly obeyed by all.

In the mean time, the bloody action of Valoutina had an unsatisfactory result. The Russians, whose rear-guard had been attacked, had moved off without losing either guns, prisoners, or baggage. They had lost equal numbers with the French, but the time was fast approaching when they must possess a numerical superiority, and when, of course, an equal loss would tell in favour of the party which was nearest to its resources.

The plan of Barclay de Tolly had hitherto been scrupulously adhered to. All general actions had been cautiously avoided; and while no means were left unemployed to weaken the enemy in partial actions, and to draw him on from swamp to swamp, from conflagration to conflagration, from one wild and waste scene to another of equal sterility and disconsolation, the end had been in a great measure attained, of undermining the force and breaking the moral courage of the invading army, who wan-

dered forward like men in a dream, feeling on all hands a sense of oppressive and stifling opposition, yet unable to encounter anything substantial which the slumberer can struggle with and overcome. Barclay de Tolly, if he had made some faults in extending his line too much at the commencement of the campaign, and afterwards by his false movements upon Rudnew, had more than atoned for these errors by the dexterity with which he had manœuvred before Smolensk, and the advantages which he had gained over the enemy on various other occasions. But they were now approaching Moscow the Grand, the Sanctified, and the military councils of Russia were about to change their character.

The spirit of the Russians, especially of the new levies, was more and more exasperated at the retreat, which seemed to have no end; and at the style of defence, which seemed only to consist in inflicting on the country, by the hands of Cossacks or Tartars, the very desolation which was perhaps the worst evil they could experience from the French. The natural zeal of the new levies, their confidence, and their desire to be led to fight in the cause for which they were enlisted, eagerly declared against further retreat; and they demanded a halt, and a battle under a Russian general, more interested, as they supposed such must be, in the defence of the country, than a German stranger.

The Emperor almost alone continued to adhere to the opinion of Barclay de Tolly. But he could not bid defiance to the united voice of his people and his military council. The political causes which demanded a great battle in defence of Moscow were strong and numerous, and overcame the military reasons which certainly recommended that a risk so tremendous should not be incurred.

In compliance, therefore, with the necessity of the case, the Emperor sacrificed his own opinion. General Kutusof, an officer high in military esteem among the Russians, was sent for from the corps which had been employed on the Danube against the Turks, to take the chief command of the grand army; and it was to Barclay's great honour, that, thus superseded, he continued to serve with the utmost zeal and good faith in a subordinate situation.

The French were not long of learning that their enemy's system of war was to be changed, and that the new Russian general was to give them battle, the object which they had so long panted for. Buonaparte, who had halted six days at Smolensk, moved from thence on the 24th August, and now pressed forward to join the advanced guard of his army at Gjatz. In this place, his followers found a Frenchman who had dwelt long in Russia. They learned from this man the promotion of Kutousof to

the chief command of the army opposed to them, and that he was placed there for the express purpose of giving battle to the French army. The news were confirmed by the manner of a Russian officer, who arrived under some pretext with a flag of truce, but probably to espy the state of the invader's army. There was defiance in the look of this man; and when he was asked by a French general what they would find between Wiasma and Moscow, he answered sternly, « Pultawa. » There was, therefore, no doubt, that battle was approaching.

But the confusion of Buonaparte's troops was still such, that he was obliged to halt two days at Gjatz, in order to collect and repose his army. He arrived at the destined field of battle, an elevated plain, called Borodino, which the Russians had secured with lines and batteries.

The French army were opposed to them on the 5th September, having consumed seventeen days in marching two hundred and eighty wersts. Their first operation was a successful attack upon a redoubt in the Russian front, but which—a great error in war—was situated too distant from it to be effectually supported. The French gained it and kept it. The armies lay in presence of each other all the next day, preparing for the approaching contest. Upon a position naturally strong, the Russians had

raised very formidable field-works. Their right flank rested on a wood, which was covered by some detached entrenchments. A brook, occupying in its course a deep ravine, covered the front of the right wing, and the centre of the position as far as the river of Borodino, from that village the left extended down to another village, called Semoneskoie, which is more open, yet protected by ravines and thickets in front. This, as the most accessible point, was anxiously secured by redoubts and batteries; and in the centre of the position, upon a gentle elevation, arose a sort of double battery, like a citadel, for the protection of the whole line.

In this strong position was stationed the Russian army, equal now in numbers to the French, as each army might be about 120,000 men. They were commanded by a veteran, slow, cautious, tenacious of his purpose, wily, too, as Napoleon afterwards found to his cost, but perhaps not otherwise eminent as a military leader. The army he led were of one nation and language, all conscious that this battle had been granted to their own ardent wishes, and determined to make good the eagerness with which they had called for it.

The French army, again, consisted of various nations; but they were the *élite*, and seasoned soldiers who had survived the distresses of a most calamitous march: they were the veterans

of the victors of Europe; they were headed by Napoleon in person, and under his immediate command by those marshals, whose names in arms were only inferior to his own. Besides a consciousness of their superiority in action, of which, from the manner in which they had covered themselves in entrenchments, the enemy seemed aware, the French had before them the prospect of utter destruction, if they should sustain a defeat in a country so difficult that they could hardly advance even as a successful army, and certainly could never hope to retreat as a routed one. Buonaparte's address to his troops had less of the tinsel of oratory than he generally used on such occasions. «Soldiers,» he said, «here is the battle you have longed for; it is necessary, for it brings us plenty, good winter quarters, and a safe return to France. Behave yourselves so that posterity may say of each of you, 'He was in that great battle under the walls of Moscow.'»

In the Russian camp was a scene of a different kind, calculated to awaken feelings to which France had long ceased to appeal. The Greek clergy showed themselves to the troops, arrayed in their rich vestments, and displaying for general worship the images of their holiest saints. They told their countrymen of the wrongs which had been offered by the invaders to earth as well as Heaven, and exhorted them to merit a place in paradise by their be-

haviour in that day's battle. The Russians answered with shouts.

Two deeply-interesting circumstances occurred to Napoleon the day before the battle. An officer brought him a portrait of his boy, the King of Rome, which he displayed on the outside of the tent, not only to satisfy the officers, but the soldiers, who crowded to look upon the son of their Emperor. The other was the arrival of an officer from Spain with dispatches, giving Napoleon news of the loss of the battle of Salamanca. He bore the evil tidings with temper and firmness, and soon turned his thoughts alike from domestic enjoyments and foreign defeats, to forming the necessary plans for the action before him.

Davoust proposed a plan for turning the left of the enemy's entrenched line, by following the old road from Smolensk to Moscow, and placing 35,000 men in the flank and rear of that part of the Russian position. This operation was partly to be accomplished by a night march, partly on the morning, while the rest of the army was engaging the enemy's attention in front. The ground to which this road would have conducted Davoust and his troops, forms the highest land in the neighbourhood, as appears from the rivulets taking their source there. Upon this commanding position the attacking corps might have been formed in the rear of the Russian line. Such a movement

on that point must have cut off the Russians from their point of retreat on Mojaisk and Moscow, and Davoust might have come down on their line, driving every thing before him, advancing from redoubt to redoubt, and dispersing reserve after reserve, till the Russians should no longer have the semblance of an army. Perhaps Napoleon considered this plan as too hazardous, as it implied a great weakening of his front line, which, in that case, might have been attacked and broken before the corps d'armée under Davoust had attained the desired position.

The Emperor therefore determined that Poniatowski, with not more than five thousand men, should make a demonstration, that should commence upon their left, in the direction proposed by Davoust, and that then a general attack should commence on the Russian right and centre. Foreseeing an obstinate resistance, he had ordered as much artillery as possible to be brought into line, and the guns on each side are said to have amounted to a thousand. The battle began about seven o'clock, by Ney's attacking the bastioned redoubt on the Russian centre, with the greatest violence, while Prince Eugène made equal efforts to dislodge the enemy from the village of Semoneskoie, and the adjoining fortifications. No action was ever more keenly debated, nor at such a wasteful expenditure of human life.

The fury of the French onset at length carried the redoubts, but the Russians rallied under the very line of their enemy's fire, and advanced again to the combat, to recover their entrenchments. Regiments of peasants, who till that day had never seen war, and who still had no other uniform than their gray jackets, formed with the steadiness of veterans, crossed their brows, and, having uttered their national exclamation,—« *Gospodee pomiloui nas!*—God have mercy upon us!»—rushed into the thickest of the battle, where the survivors, without feeling fear or astonishment, closed their ranks over their comrades as they fell, while, supported at once by enthusiasm for their cause, and by a religious sense of predestination, life and death seemed alike indifferent to them.

The fate of the day seemed more than once so critical, that Napoleon was strongly urged, on more than one occasion, to bring up the Young Guard, whom he had in reserve, as the last means of deciding the contest. He was censured by some of those around him for not having done so; and it has been imputed to illness, as he had passed a bad night, and seemed unusually languid during the whole of the day. But the secret of his refusal seems to be contained in his reply to Berthier when he urged him on the subject. « And if there is another battle to-morrow, where is my army?» The fact is, that this body of

ten thousand household troops were his last reserve. They had been spared as far as possible in the march, and had, of course, retained their discipline in a proportional degree; and had they sustained any considerable loss, which, from the obstinate resistance and repeated efforts of the Russians, was to be apprehended, Buonaparte, whom even victory must leave in a perilous condition, would in that case have lost the only corps upon whom, in the general disorganization of his army, he could thoroughly depend. The compromising the last reserve is an expedient reluctantly resorted to by prudent generals, and perhaps, if Napoleon had been as circumspect on that subject at Waterloo as at Borodino, his retreat from that bloody field might have been less calamitous than it proved.

The Russians, whose desperate efforts to recover their line of redoubts had exposed them to so much loss, were at length commanded to retreat; and although the victory was certainly with the French, yet their enemies might be said rather to desist from fighting, than to have suffered a defeat. Indeed, it was the French who, after the battle, drew off to their original ground, and left the Russians in possession of the bloody field of battle, where they buried their dead, and carried off their wounded, at their leisure. Their ca-

valry even alarmed the French camp on the very night of their victory.

Both parties sustained a dreadful loss in this sanguinary battle. Among that of the Russians, the death of the gallant Prince Bagration, whose admirable retreat from Poland we have had occasion to commemorate, was generally lamented. General Touczkoff also died of his wounds; and many other Russian generals were wounded. Their loss amounted to the awful sum total of fifteen thousand men killed, and more than thirty thousand wounded. The French were supposed to have at least ten thousand men killed, and double the number wounded. Of these last few recovered, for the great convent of Kolotskoi, which served them as an hospital, was very ill provided with any thing for their relief; and the medical attendants could not procure a party to scour the neighbouring villages, to obtain lint and other necessaries,—for it seems even the necessaries of an hospital could, in this ill-fated army, only be collected by marauding. Eight French generals were slain, of whom Montbrun and Caulaincourt, brother of the Grand Equerry, were men of distinguished reputation. About thirty other generals were wounded. Neither party could make any boast of military trophies, for the Russians made a thousand prisoners, and the French

scarce twice the number; and Kutousof carried away ten pieces of cannon belonging to the French, leaving in their hands thirteen guns of his own. So slight, except in the numbers of slain, had been the consequences of the battle, that it might have seemed to have been fought, as in the games of chivalry, merely to ascertain which party had the superior strength and courage.

According to the Russian accounts, Kutousof entertained thoughts of giving battle again the next day; but the reports from various corps having made him acquainted with the very large loss they had sustained, he deemed the army too much exhausted to incur such a risk. He retreated the next day upon Mojaisk, without leaving behind him a single fragment to indicate that he had the day before sustained such an immense loss. Upon the 9th September, the French arrived at Mojaisk, and came again in sight of the Russian rear-guard, and made dispositions to attack them. But on the 11th, they found that the Russian army had again disappeared, by a retreat so well conducted, and so effectually masked and concealed, as to leave Napoleon altogether uncertain whether they had taken the road to Moscow, or to Kalouga. Owing to this uncertainty, Napoleon was obliged to remain at Mojaisk till the 12th, when he re-

ceived positive intelligence that the Russian army had retreated upon their capital.

It is impossible to avoid observing, how often the Russian army, though large, and consisting of new levies, had, in the course of this campaign, escaped from the front of the French, and left Napoleon at a loss to conjecture whither they had gone. Besides the present occasion, the same circumstance took place at Vitepsk, and again before the walls of Moscow. No doubt the Russians were in their own country, and possessed clouds of Cossacks, by means of whom they might cover the retreat of their main body; yet with all these advantages we are led to admire the natural spirit of obedience, and instinct of discipline, by which they were brought to execute that movement with such steadiness, that not a single straggler remained to betray their secret.

On the 12th September, Buonaparte resumed his march, the army having no better guide than the direction of the high-road, and the men no better food than horse-flesh and bruised wheat. Upon the previous day, Murat and Mortier, who led the van-guard, found the Russians strongly posted near Krymskoie, where the inconsiderate valour of the King of Naples brought on an action, in which the French lost two thousand men. Still Buona-

parte pursued the traces of the Russians, because he could not suppose it possible that they would resign their capital without a second struggle. He was the more anxious to meet it, as two divisions of the Italian army, under Laborde and Pino, had joined him from Smolensk, which again carried his numbers, sore thinned after the battle of Borodino, to upwards of one hundred thousand men.

A council of war, of the Russian generals, had been called, to deliberate on the awful question, whether they should expose the only army which they had in the centre of Russia, to the consequences of a too probable defeat, or whether they should abandon without a struggle, and as a prey to the spoiler, the holy Moscow—the Jerusalem of Russia—the city beloved of God and dear to man, with the name and existence of which so many historical, patriotic, national, and individual feelings were now involved. Reason spoke one language, pride and affection held another.

To hazard a second battle, was in a great measure to place the fate of their grand army upon the issue; and this was too perilous an adventure even for the protection of the capital. The consideration seems to have prevailed, that Napoleon being now in the centre of Russia, with an army daily diminishing, and the hard season coming on, every hour during

which a decisive action could be delayed was a loss to France, and an advantage to Russia. This was the rather the case, that Witgenstein, on the northern frontier, being reinforced by Steingel with the army of Finland; and, on the south, that of Moldavia being united to Tormazoff,—Lithuania, and Poland, which formed the base of Napoleon's operations, were in hazard of being occupied by the Russians from both flanks, an event which must endanger his supplies, magazines, reserves, and communications of every kind, and put in peril at once his person and his army. Besides, the Russian generals reflected, that by evacuating Moscow, a measure which the inhabitants could more easily accomplish than those of any other city in the civilized world, they would diminish the prize to the victor, and leave him nothing to triumph over save the senseless buildings. It was, therefore, determined, that the preservation of the army was more essential to Russia than the defence of Moscow, and it was agreed that the ancient capital of the Czars should be abandoned to its fate.

Count Rostopchin, the governor of Moscow, was a man of worth and talent, of wit also, as we have been informed, joined to a certain eccentricity. He had, since the commencement of the war, kept up the spirits of the citizens with favourable reports and loyal de-

clarations, qualified to infuse security into the public mind. After the fate of Smolensk, however, and especially after the recommencement of Buonaparte's march eastward, many of the wealthy inhabitants of Moscow removed or concealed their most valuable effects, and left the city themselves. Rostopchin continued, however, his assurances, and took various means to convince the people that there was no danger. Among other contrivances, he engaged a great number of females in the task of constructing a very large balloon, from which he was to shower down fire, as the people believed, upon the French army. Under this pretext, he is stated to have collected a large quantity of fire-works and combustibles, actually destined for a very different purpose.

As time passed on, however, the inhabitants became more and more alarmed, and forming a dreadful idea of the French, and of the horrors which would attend their entrance into the city, not only the nobility, gentry, and those of the learned professions, but tradesmen, mechanics, and the lower orders in general, left Moscow by thousands, while the governor, though keeping up the language of defiance, did all he could to superintend and encourage the emigration. The archives and the public treasures were removed; the magazines, particularly those of provisions, were emptied,

as far as time permitted; and the roads, especially to the south, were crowded with files of carriages, and long columns of men, women, and children on foot, singing the hymns of their church, and often turning their eyes back to the magnificent city, which was so soon destined to be a pile of ruins.

The Grand Army of Moscow arrived in the position of Fili, near the capital; not, it was now acknowledged, to defend the sacred city, but to traverse its devoted streets, associating with their march the garrison, and such of the citizens as were fit to bear arms, and so leave the capital to its fate. On the 14th of September, the troops marched with downcast looks, furled banners, and silent drums, through the streets of the metropolis, and went out at the Kolomna gate. Their long columns of retreat were followed by the greater part of the remaining population. Meanwhile Rostopchin, ere departing, held a public court of justice. Two men were brought before him, one a Russian, an enthusiast, who had learned in Germany, and been foolish enough to express at Moscow, some of the old French republican doctrines. The other was a Frenchman, whom the near approach of his countrymen had emboldened to hold some indiscreet political language. The father of the Russian delinquent was present. He was expected to

interfere. He did so; but it was to demand his son's death.

« I grant you, » said the governor, « some moments to take leave and to bless him. »

« Shall I bless a rebel? » said this Scythian Brutus. « Be my curse upon him that has betrayed his country! »

The criminal was hewed down on the spot.

« Stranger, » said Rostopchin to the Frenchman, « thou hast been imprudent; yet it is but natural thou shouldst desire the coming of thy countrymen. Be free, then, and go to meet them. Tell them there was one traitor in Russia, and thou hast seen him punished. »

The governor then caused the jails to be opened, and the criminals to be set at liberty; and, abandoning the desolate city to these banditti, and a few of the lowest rabble, he mounted his horse, and, putting himself at the head of his retainers, followed the march of the army.

CHAPTER XI.

On 14th September, Napoleon reaches Moscow, which he finds deserted by the Inhabitants.—The City is discovered to be on Fire about midnight.—Napoleon takes up his quarters in the Kremlin.—The Fire is stopt next day, but arises again at night—Believed to be wilful, and several Russians apprehended and Shot.—On the third night, the Kremlin is discovered to be on Fire.—Buonaparte leaves it, and takes his abode at Petrowsky.—The Fire rages till the 19th, when four-fifths of the City are burnt down.—On the 20th, Buonaparte returns to the Kremlin.—Discussion as to the origin of this great Conflagration.—Disorganization and Indiscipline of the French Army.—Difficulty as to the Route on leaving Moscow.—Lauriston sent with a Letter to the Emperor Alexander.—Retrospect of the march of the Russian Army, after leaving Moscow.—Lauriston has an interview with Kutousof on 5th October.—The result.—Armistice made by Murat.—Preparations for Retreat.—The Emperor Alexander refuses to treat.

On the 14th September, 1812, while the rear-guard of the Russians were in the act of evacuating Moscow, Napoleon reached the hill called the Mount of Salvation, because it is

there where the natives kneel and cross themselves at first sight of the Holy City

Moscow seemed lordly and striking as ever, with the steeples of its three hundred churches, and its copper domes glittering in the sun, its palaces of Eastern architecture mingled with trees, and surrounded with gardens, and its Kremlin, a huge triangular mass of towers, something between a palace and a castle, which rose like a citadel out of the general mass of groves and buildings But not a chimney sent up smoke, not a man appeared on the battlements, or at the gates Napoleon gazed every moment, expecting to see a train of bearded boyards arriving to fling themselves at his feet, and place their wealth at his disposal His first exclamation was, « Behold at last that celebrated city!»—His next, « It was full time.» His army, less regardful of the past or the future, fixed their eyes on the goal of their wishes, and a shout of « Moscow!—Moscow!» —passed from rank to rank.

Meantime no one interrupted his meditations, until a message came from Murat. He had pushed in among the Cossacks, who covered the rear of the Russians, and readily admitted to a parley the chivalrous champion, whom they at once recognized, having so often seen him blazing in the van of the French cavalry. The message which he sent to Buona-

parte intimated, that Miloradovitch threatened to burn the town, if his rear was not allowed time to march through it. This was a tone of defiance. Napoleon, however, granted the armistice, for which no inhabitants were left to be grateful.

After waiting two hours, he received from some French inhabitants, who had hidden themselves during the evacuation, the strange intelligence that Moscow was deserted by its population. The tidings that a population of two hundred and fifty thousand persons had left their native city was incredible, and Napoleon still commanded the boyards, the public functionaries, to be brought before him, nor could he be convinced of what had actually happened, till they led to his presence some of that refuse of humanity, the only live creatures they could find in the city, but they were wretches of the lowest rank. When he was at last convinced that the desertion of the capital was universal, he smiled bitterly, and said, « The Russians will soon learn better the value of their capital. »

The signal was now given for the troops to advance; and the columns, still in a state of wonder at the solitude and silence which received them everywhere, penetrated through that assemblage of huts, mingled with palaces, where it seemed that Penury, which had scarce means to obtain the ordinary necessaries of life,

had for her next door neighbour all the wealth and profuse expenditure of the East. At once the silence was broken by a volley of musketry, which some miserable fanatics poured from the battlements of the Kremlin on the first French troops that approached the palace of the Czars. These wretches were most of them intoxicated, yet the determined obstinacy with which they threw away their lives, was another feature of that rugged patriotism of which the French had seen, and were yet to see, so many instances.

When he entered the gates of Moscow, Buonaparte, as if unwilling to encounter the sight of the empty streets, stopt immediately on entering the first suburb. His troops were quartered in the desolate city. During the first few hours after their arrival, an obscure rumour, which could not be traced, but one of those which are sometimes found to get abroad before the approach of some awful certainty, announced that the city would be endangered by fire in the course of the night. The report seemed to arise from those evident circumstances which rendered the event probable, but no one took any notice of it, until at midnight, when the soldiers were startled from their quarters by the report that the town was in flames. The memorable conflagration began amongst the coachmakers' warehouses and workshops in the Bazaar, or general market,

which was the most rich district of the city. It was imputed to accident, and the progress of the flames was subdued by the exertions of the French soldiers. Napoleon, who had been roused by the tumult, hurried to the spot, and when the alarm seemed at an end, he retired, not to his former quarters in the suburbs, but to the Kremlin, the hereditary palace of the only sovereign whom he had ever treated as an equal, and over whom his successful arms had now attained such an apparently immense superiority. Yet he did not suffer himself to be dazzled by the advantage he had obtained, but availed himself of the light of the blazing Bazaar, to write to the Emperor proposals of peace with his own hand. They were dispatched by a Russian officer of rank, who had been disabled by indisposition from following the army. But no answer was ever returned.

Next day the flames had disappeared, and the French officers luxuriously employed themselves in selecting out of the deserted palaces of Moscow, that which best pleased the fancy of each for his residence. At night the flames again arose in the north and west quarters of the city. As far the greater part of the houses were built of wood, the conflagration spread with the most dreadful rapidity. This was at first imputed to the blazing brands and sparkles which were carried by the wind; but at length it was observed, that, as often as the wind

changed, and it changed three times in that terrible night, new flames broke always forth in that direction, where the existing gale was calculated to direct them on the Kremlin. These horrors were increased by the chance of explosion. There was, though as yet unknown to the French, a magazine of powder in the Kremlin; besides that a park of artillery, with its ammunition, was drawn up under the Emperor's window. Morning came, and with it a dreadful scene. During the whole night, the metropolis had glared with an untimely and unnatural light. It was now covered with a thick and suffocating atmosphere of almost palpable smoke. The flames defied the efforts of the French soldiery, and it is said that the fountains of the city had been rendered inaccessible, the water-pipes cut, and the fire-engines destroyed or carried off.

Then came the reports of fire-balls having been found burning in deserted houses; of men and women, that, like demons, had been seen openly spreading the flames, and who were said to be furnished with combustibles for rendering their dreadful work more secure. Several wretches against whom such acts had been charged were seized upon, and, probably without much inquiry, were shot on the spot. While it was almost impossible to keep the roof of the Kremlin clear of the burning brands which showered down the wind, Napoleon

watched from the windows the course of the fire which devoured his fair conquest, and the exclamation burst from him, « These are indeed Scythians! »

The equinoctial gales rose higher and higher upon the third night, and extended the flames, with which there was no longer any human power of contending. At the dead hour of midnight, the Kremlin itself was found to be on fire. A soldier of the Russian police, charged with being the incendiary, was turned over to the summary vengeance of the Imperial Guard. Buonaparte was then, at length, persuaded, by the entreaties of all around him, to relinquish his quarters in the Kremlin, to which, as the visible mark of his conquest, he had seemed to cling with the tenacity of a lion holding a fragment of his prey. He encountered both difficulty and danger in retiring from the palace, and before he could gain the city-gate, he had to traverse with his suite streets arched with fire, and in which the very air they breathed was suffocating. At length, he gained the open country, and took up his abode in a palace of the Czar's called Petrowsky, about a French league from the city. As he looked back on the fire, which, under the influence of the autumnal wind, swelled and surged around the Kremlin, like an infernal ocean around a sable Pandemonium, he could

not suppress the ominous expression, « This bodes us great misfortune.»

The fire continued to triumph unopposed, and consumed in a few days what it had cost centuries to raise. « Palaces and temples,» says a Russian author, « monuments of art, and miracles of luxury, the remains of ages which had past away, and those which had been the creation of yesterday; the tombs of ancestors, and the nursery-cradles of the present generation, were indiscriminately destroyed. Nothing was left of Moscow save the remembrance of the city, and the deep resolution to avenge its fall.»[1]

The fire raged till the 19th with unabated violence, and then began to slacken for want of fuel. It is said, four-fifths of this great city were laid in ruins.

On the 20th, Buonaparte returned to the Kremlin; and, as if in defiance of the terrible scene which he had witnessed, took measures as if he were disposed to make Moscow his residence for some time. He even caused a theatre to be fitted up, and plays to be acted by performers sent from Paris, to show perhaps that it was not in the most terrible of elements to overawe his spirit, or interrupt his usual habits of life. In the same style of in-

[1] Karamzin, a Russian historian of eminence, whose works were expressly excepted from the censorship, by the late Emperor Alexander

difference or affectation, a set of very precise regulations respecting the Théâtre Français was drawn up by the Emperor amid the ruins of Moscow. He was not superior to the affectation of chusing distant places and foreign capitals for the date of domestic and trifling ordinances. It gave the Emperor an air of ubiquity, to issue rules for a Parisian theatre from the Kremlin. It had already been prophesied that he would sacrifice his army to have the pleasure of dating a decree from Moscow.

The conflagration of Moscow was so complete in its devastation; so important in its consequences; so critical in the moment of its commencement, that almost all the eye-witnesses have imputed it to a sublime, yet almost horrible exertion of patriotic decision on the part of the Russians, their government, and, in particular, of the governor, Rostopchin. Nor has the positive denial of Count Rostopchin himself diminished the general conviction, that the fire was directed by him. All the French officers continue to this day to ascribe the conflagration to persons whom he had employed.

On the other hand, there are many, and those good judges of the probabilities in such an event, who have shown strong reasons for believing, that Moscow shared but the fate of a deserted city, which is almost always burnt

as well as pillaged. We have stated elsewhere the arguments on both sides;[1] and, in the mean time, we shall only observe, that should the scale of evidence incline to the side of accident, History will lose one of the grandest, as well as most terrible incidents which she has on record. Considered as a voluntary Russian act, the burning of their capital is an incident of gigantic character, which we consider with awe and terror; our faculties so confused by the immensity of the object, considered in its different bearings, that we hardly know whether to term it vice or virtue, patriotism or vengeance.

Whether the conflagration of Moscow was, or was not, the work of Russian will, and Russian hands, the effects which it was to produce on the campaign were likely to be of the most important character. Buonaparte's object in pressing on to the capital at every risk, was to grasp a pledge, for the redemption of which he had no doubt Alexander would be glad to make peace on his own terms. But the prize of his victory, however fair to the sight, had, like that fabled fruit said to grow on the banks of the Dead Sea, proved in the end but soot and ashes. Moscow, indeed, he had seized, but it had perished in his grasp; and far from being able to work upon Alexander's fears for

[1] See Appendix, No. II.

its safety, it was reasonable to think that its total destruction had produced the most vehement resentment on the part of the Russian monarch, since Napoleon received not even the civility of an answer to his conciliatory letter. And thus the acquisition so much desired as the means of procuring peace, had become, by this catastrophe, the cause of the most irreconcilable enmity.

Neither was it a trifling consideration, that Napoleon had lost by this dreadful fire a great part of the supplies, which he expected the capture of the metropolis would have contributed for the support of his famished army. Had there existed in Moscow the usual population of a capital, he would have found the usual modes of furnishing its markets in full activity. These, doubtless, are not of the common kind, for provisions are sent to this capital, not, as is usual, from fertile districts around the city, but from distant regions, whence they are brought by water-carriage in the summer, and by sledges, which travel on the ice and frozen snow, in the winter time. To Moscow, with its usual inhabitants, these supplies must have been remitted as usual, lest the numerous population of 250,000 and upwards, should be famished, as well as the enemy's army. But Moscow deserted,—Moscow burnt, and reduced to mountains of cinders and ashes,—had no occasion for such supplies,

nor was it to be supposed that the provinces from which they were usually remitted, would send them to a heap of ruins, where there remained none to be fed, save the soldiers of the invading army. This conviction came with heavy anticipation on the Emperor of France and his principal officers.

Meanwhile the ruins of Moscow, and the remnant which was left standing, afforded the common soldiers an abundance of booty during their short day of rest, and, as is their nature, they enjoyed the present moment without thinking of futurity. The army was dispersed over the city, plundering at pleasure whatever they could find, sometimes discovering quantities of melted gold and silver, sometimes rich merchandize and precious articles, of which they knew not the value, sometimes articles of luxury, which contrasted strangely with their general want of comforts, and even necessaries. It was not uncommon to see the most tattered shoeless wretches, sitting among bales of rich merchandize, or displaying costly shawls,* precious furs, and vestments rich with barbaric pearl and gold. In another place, there were to be seen soldiers possessed of tea, sugar, coffee, and similar luxuries, while the same individuals could scarce procure carrion to eat, or muddy water to drink. Of sugar, in particular, they had such quantities, that they mixed it with their horse-flesh soup

The whole was a contrast of the wildest and most lavish excess, with the last degree of necessity, disgusting to witness, and most ominous in its presage. *They* esteemed themselves happiest of all, who could procure intoxicating liquors, and escape by some hours of insensibility from the scene of confusion around them.

Napoleon and his officers toiled hard to restore some degree of organization to the army. The plundering, which could not be discontinued, was latterly set about more regularly, and detachments were sent to pillage the ruins of Moscow, as in turn of duty. The rest of the troops were withdrawn from the city, or confined to their quarters in the buildings which remained entire. Every thing was done to protect the few peasants, who brought provisions to the camp for sale. Nevertheless, few appeared, and at length not one was to be seen. The utmost exertion, therefore, could not, it was obvious, render Moscow a place of rest for many days; and the difficulty of chusing the route by which to leave it, became now an embarrassing consideration.

There were three modes of proceeding on evacuating Moscow, all of which had in their turn Napoleon's anxious consideration. First, he might march on St Petersburgh, and deal with the modern, as he had with the ancient capital of Russia. This counsel best suited

the daring genius of Buonaparte, ever bent upon the game by which all is to be lost, or all won. He even spoke of that measure as a thing resolved; but Berthier and Bessières prevailed in convincing him, that the lateness of the season, the state of the roads, the want of provisions, and the condition of the army, rendered such an attempt totally desperate. The second proposed measure, was to move southwards upon the fertile province of Kalouga, and thence to proceed westward towards Smolensk, which was their first dépôt. In this route Napoleon must have fought a general action with Kutousof, who, as we shall presently see, had taken a position to the south of Moscow. This, indeed, would have been, in many respects, a motive with Napoleon to take the route to Kalouga; but a second battle of Borodino, as obstinately fought, and as doubtful in its termination, would have been a bad commencement for a retreat, the flanks of which would certainly be annoyed, even if the Moldavian army did not intercept the front. The third plan was, to return by the route on which he had advanced, and on which, by a few places hastily fortified, he still preserved a precarious communication with Smolensk, Vitepsk, and so on to Wilna. This line, however, lay through the countries which had been totally destroyed and wasted by the advance of the army, and where all the

villages and hamlets had been burned and abandoned, either by the French or the Russians themselves. To take this direction was to confront famine.

Napoleon's hesitation on this important point was increased by the eagerness with which he still adhered to his own plan for the conclusion of the war, by a triumphant peace with Alexander, concluded on the ruins of his capital. His mind, which ever clung with tenacity to the opinions he had once formed, revolved the repeated instances in which his voice had in such circumstances commanded peace, and dictated the articles. The idea which he had formed of Alexander's disposition during the interviews of Tilsit and Erfurt, had made him regard the Czar as docile, and disposed to submit to the rebuke of his own predominant genius. But he mistook the character of the sovereign, and of the nation he commanded. The one, although he had hitherto encountered nothing but defeat and disaster, was determined not to submit, while his immense resources furnished the means of resistance. The other, in all probability, would not have permitted the sovereign to act otherwise, for the popular indignation was now at spring-tide; and from the palace of the Czar to the hut of the slave, there was nothing breathed save resistance and revenge.

It was in vain, therefore, that Napoleon expected that Alexander would open some communication on the subject of, or would answer, the letter which he had sent, during the first night he possessed Moscow, by a Russian officer. He grew impatient at length, and resolved himself to make farther advances. But not even to his confidential advisers would he own that he sought peace on his own score; he affected to be anxious only on account of Alexander. « He is my friend, » he said; « a prince of excellent qualities; and should he yield to his inclinations, and propose peace, the barbarians in their rage will dethrone and put him to death, and fill the throne with some one less tractable. We will send Caulaincourt to break the way for negotiation, and prevent the odium which Alexander might incur, by being the first to propose a treaty. » The Emperor abode by this resolution, excepting in so far as he was persuaded with some difficulty to dispatch General Count Lauriston, his aide-de-camp, upon this embassy; lest Caulaincourt's superior rank of Master of the Horse might indicate that his master sought a treaty, less for Alexander's security than his own, and that of his army. Lauriston, who was well acquainted with the Russian character, urged several doubts against the policy of the mission entrusted to him, as betraying their necessity to the enemy; and recommended that

the army should, without losing a day, commence its retreat by Kalouga, and the more southern route. Buonaparte, however, retained his determination, and Lauriston was dismissed with a letter to the Emperor Alexander, and the parting instruction,—« I must have peace, and will sacrifice, to obtain it, all except my honour.»

Before we give the result of Lauriston's mission, it is proper to trace the movements of the Russian grand army, since their melancholy march through the city of Moscow. They left the city by the route of Kolomna, and marched for two days in that direction; and having thus imposed on the enemy a belief, that they were bent in securing the road to St Petersburgh, leaving the southern provinces undefended, Kutousof executed one of the most dexterous movements of the Russian army during the campaign. He left General Winzengerode, with an army of observation, on the Petersburgh road, and, turning to the southward, performed a circular march, of which Moscow was the centre, so as to transfer the grand army to the route towards Kalouga. They marched in stern dejection; for the wind, great as the distance was, showered among their ranks the ashes of their burning capital, and in the darkness, the flames were seen to rage like a huge ocean of fire. The movement was a bold one also, for, although per-

formed at a respectful distance from the French army, yet the march was for three days a flank march, and consequently of a very delicate character The Russians manœuvred, however, with such precision, that they performed their movement in perfect safety, and while the French troops, who had been sent in their pursuit, were amusing themselves with pursuing two regiments of horse, which had been left on the Kolomna road, they were astonished to find that the grand Russian army had assumed a position on the other side of Moscow, from which they could operate upon and harass, nay, intercept at pleasure, Napoleon's line of communication with Smolensk and with Poland, and at the same time cover the town of Kalouga, where great magazines had been assembled, and that of Toula, famed for the fabrication of arms and artillery

The ardent King of Naples, with the advanced guard of his brother-in-law's army at length moved against their enemies on the Kalouga road, but little took place save skirmishes, by which the Russians protected their rear, until they took up a stationary posture in the strong position of Taroutino They were here admirably placed for the purpose of covering the important town of Kalouga There are three routes which lead from Moscow to that city, and Taroutino being situated in the middle road, an army placed there can with little

trouble, by moving to the right or the left, occupy either of the other two. The front of the Russian position was covered by the river Nera. The camp was amply supplied with provisions from the wealthy and plentiful districts in the rear; and as the spirit of the country more and more developed itself, recruits and new-raised regiments arrived faster than the exertions of the veteran soldiers could train them to arms, although the Russian, from his docility and habits of obedience, receives military discipline with unusual readiness. The Ukraine and Don sent twenty regiments of Cossacks, most of them men who, having already served their stipulated time, were excused from military duty, but who universally assumed the lance and sabre at a crisis of such emergency.

Murat at the same time pressed forward to establish himself in front of the Russian camp, for the purpose of watching their motions. In his progress, he passed what had been a splendid domain, belonging to Count Rostopchin, the governor of Moscow. It was in ashes; and a letter from the proprietor informed the French he had destroyed it, lest it should give an invader comfort or shelter.[1] The same

[1] « Frenchmen, » this was the tenor of this remarkable intimation, « for eight years it has been my pleasure to embellish this my family residence. The inhabitants 1,700 in number, will leave it as you approach, and it

spirit possessed the peasantry. They set fire to their hamlets, wherever they could be of use to the invaders; proclaimed the punishment of death to all of their own order, who, from avarice or fear, should be tempted to supply the enemy with provisions; and they inflicted it without mercy on such as incurred the penalty. It is an admitted fact, that when the French, in order to induce their refractory prisoners to labour in their service, branded some of them on the hand with the letter N, as a sign that they were the serfs of Napoleon, one peasant laid his branded hand on a log of wood, and struck it off with the axe which he held in the other, in order to free himself from the supposed thraldom. The French who looked on shuddered, and cursed the hour which brought them into collision with enemies of such a rugged and inexorable disposition. The patriotism of the peasants in general had been turned to still better account by the partisan or guerilla warfare, for which Spain had given an example.

Lieutenant-Colonel Dennis Davidoff, who became well known to the French by the name of *le Capitaine Noir*, had suggested this species of war to Prince Bagration, a little before the

will be reduced to ashes, that not one of you may pollute it by your presence. I have left you two palaces in Moscow, with their furniture, worth half a million of rubles. Here you will only find ashes."

battle of Borodino; and had obtained distinguished success at the head of a small party of Cossacks and Hussars, by his operations on the route betwixt Gjatz and Wiazma, in cutting off supplies, and defeating small detached parties of the enemy. He was speedily put at the head of a much larger force; and other free corps of the same kind were raised, with brave and active spirits at their head. They scoured the country, infested the French lines of communication, drove in their outposts, and distressed them on every point.

The peasants also took arms, and formed themselves into bodies of partisans, rendered formidable by their perfect knowledge of the woods, by-paths, and passes. They have a natural contempt for foreigners, for whom they have no other name than « the deaf and dumb,» to denote their ignorance of the Russian language. The events of the campaign, especially the conflagration of Moscow, had converted their scorn into deadly hatred; and whatever soldier of Napoleon fell into their hands was put to death without scruple or pity.

Meantime the cavalry of Murat, which afforded the best means of chastising and repressing these bands, gradually declined under hard work and want of subsistence; and, although little used to droop or distress himself about the future, the King of Naples wrote re-

peatedly from his advanced post, to press Napoleon no longer to delay a retreat which was become absolutely necessary. It was while matters were in this state that General Lauriston arrived at the Russian outposts, and after a good deal of difficulty, real or affected, was at length admitted to an interview with Kutousof, at midnight on the 5th October. His reception was such as to make him consider himself a welcome envoy.

Lauriston opened his business with a proposal for exchange of prisoners, which was of course declined on the part of Kutousof, aware, that while soldiers were plenty among the Russians, the ranks of Napoleon must become every day thinner. Lauriston next introduced the subject of the independent bands, and proposed that an end should be put to this species of unusual war, in which so many cruelties were committed. Kutousof replied, that this kind of partisan war did not depend on his orders, but arose from the native spirit of the country, which led the Russians to regard the French invasion as an incursion of Tartars. General Lauriston then entered on the real business of his mission, by asking whether « this war, which had assumed such an unheard-of character, was to last for ever; » declaring, at the same time, his master the Emperor of France's sincere desire, to ter-

minate hostilities between two great and generous nations.

The astucious old Russian saw Buonaparte's evident necessity in his affected wish for peace, and immediately adopted the course most likely to gain time, which must at once increase the difficulties of the French, and his own power of availing himself of them. He affected a sincere desire to promote a pacification, but declared he was absolutely prohibited either to receive any proposal to that effect himself, or to transmit such to the Emperor. He therefore declined to grant General Lauriston the desired passport to the presence of Alexander, but he offered to send General Wolkonsky, an aide-de-camp of the Czar, to learn his imperial pleasure.

The express charge which Lauriston had received from his master, that peace was to be obtained on any terms not inferring dishonour, did not permit him to object to this arrangement. He was even encouraged to hope it might prove effectual, so much satisfaction was expressed by General Kutousof and the officers of his military family, all of whom seemed to deplore the continuance of the war, and went so far as to say, that this annunciation of a treaty would be received at Petersburgh with public rejoicings. These accounts being transmitted to Napoleon, lulled

him into a false security. He returned to his original opinion, which had been shaken, but not subverted; and announced to his generals, with much satisfaction, that they had but to wait a fortnight for a triumphant pacification. He boasted his own superior knowledge of the Russian character, and declared, that on the arrival of his overture for peace, Petersburgh would be full of bonfires.

Napoleon, however, was not so confident of peace as to approve a singular sort of armistice which Murat had entered into with the Russians. It was to be broken off, on an intimation of three hours' space, by either party to the other; and, while in existence, it only subsisted along the fronts of the two armies, leaving the Russians at liberty to carry on their partisan war on the flanks as much as ever. The French could not obtain a load of furze, or a cart of provisions, without fighting for it, and often to disadvantage. A large party of the dragoons of the Imperial Guard were surprised and piked by the Cossacks. Two considerable convoys were surprised and cut off on the road to Mojaisk, the only communication which the French army had with its magazines and reinforcements. The French were surprised, and lost a detachment in the town of Vereia, on Murat's left flank. Thus the war continued everywhere, except on the front of

the armies, where it had the greatest chance to be favourable to the French.

This bad policy is not to be imputed to Napoleon, who had refused to authorize the armistice, but to the vanity of Murat, under whose authority it was still observed. It gave him an opportunity of amusing himself, by caracoling on the neutral ground betwixt the camps, displaying his handsome form, gallant horsemanship, and splendid dresses, to the soldiers on both sides; receiving the respectful salutes of the Russian patrols, and the applause of the Cossacks. These last used to crowd around him, partly in real admiration of his chivalrous appearance and character, which was of a kind to captivate these primitive warriors, and partly, doubtless, from their natural shrewdness, which saw the utility of maintaining his delusion. They called him their Hettman; and he was so intoxicated with their applause, as to have been said to nourish the wild idea of becoming in earnest King of the Cossacks.

Such delusions could not for ever lull Murat's vigilance to sleep. The war was all around him, and his forces were sinking under a succession of petty hostilities; while the continual rolling of drums, and the frequent platoon firing, heard from behind the Russian encampment, intimated how busily they were

engaged in drilling numerous bodies of fresh recruits. The Russian officers at the outposts began to hold ominous language, and ask the French if they had made a composition with the Northern Winter, Russia's most fearful ally. «Stay another fortnight,» they said, «and your nails will drop off, and your fingers fall from your hands, like boughs from a blighted tree.» The numbers of the Cossacks increased so much, as to resemble one of the ancient Scythian emigrations; and wild and fantastic figures, on unbroken horses, whose manes swept the ground, seemed to announce that the inmost recesses of the desert had sent forth their inhabitants. Their gray-bearded chiefs sometimes held expostulations with the French officers, in a tone very different from that which soothed the ears of Murat. «Had you not,» they said, «in France, food enough, water enough, air enough, to subsist you while you lived,—earth enough to cover you when you died; and why come you to enrich our soil with your remains, which by right belong to the land where you were born?» Such evil bodements affected the van of the army, from whence Murat transmitted them to the Emperor.

Immured in the recesses of the Kremlin, Napoleon persisted in awaiting the answer to the letter dispatched by Lauriston. It had been sent to Petersburgh on the 6th, and an answer could not be expected before the 26th.

To have moved before that period, might be thought prudent in a military point of view, but, politically considered, it would greatly injure his reputation for sagacity, and destroy the impression of his infallibility. Thus sensible, and almost admitting that he was wrong, he determined, nevertheless, to persevere in the course he had chosen, in hopes that Fortune, which never before failed him, might yet stand his friend in extremity.

A bold scheme is said to have been suggested by Daru, to turn Moscow into an entrenched camp, and occupy it as winter quarters. They might kill the remainder of the horses, he said, and salt them down. foraging must do the rest. Napoleon approved of what he termed a Lion's counsel. But the fear of what might happen in France, from which this plan would have secluded them for six months, induced him finally to reject it. It might be added, that the obtaining supplies by marauding was likely to become more and more difficult, as winter and the scarcity increased, especially now that the country around Moscow was completely ruined. Besides, if Napoleon fixed himself at Moscow for the winter, not only his line of communications, but Lithuania, and the Grand Duchy, which formed the base of his operations, ran every risk of being invaded. On the south-west, the dubious faith of Austria

was all he had to trust to, for the purpose of resisting the united armies of Tchitchagoff and Tormazoff, which might be augmented to 100,000 men, and make themselves masters of Warsaw and Wilna. On the northern extremity of his general line of operations, Macdonald and St-Cyr might prove unable to resist Witgenstein and Steingel; and he had in his rear Prussia, the population of which Napoleon justly considered as ready to take arms against him at the first favourable opportunity. The scheme, therefore, for occupying winter quarters at Moscow was rejected as fraught with danger.

Even when appearances of a fall of snow reminded the Emperor of the climate which he was braving, his preparations for retreat were slowly and reluctantly made; and some of them were dictated by his vanity, rather than his judgment. All the pictures, images, and ornaments of the churches, which were left unburnt, were collected, and loaded upon wains, to follow the line of march, already too much encumbered with baggage. A gigantic cross, which stood on the tower of Ivan the Great, the tallest steeple of Moscow, was dismounted with much labour, that it might add to the trophies, which were already sufficiently cumbrous. On the same principle, Napoleon was angry when it was proposed to leave some of his immense train of

artillery, which was greatly too numerous for the reduced size of his army. «He would leave no trophy for the Russians to triumph over.» That all the artillery and baggage might be transported, he surprised his officers by an order to buy twenty thousand horses, where, perhaps, there were not an hundred to be sold, and when those which they had already were daily dying for want of forage. The latter article, he ordered, should be provided for two months, in dépôts on his route. This mandate might make known his wants. but as it certainly could contribute little to supply them, it must only have been issued for the purpose of keeping up appearances. Perhaps the desire to have some excuse to himself and others for indulging in his lingering wish to remain a day or two longer, to await the answer from St Petersburgh, might be a secret cause of issuing orders, which must occasion some inquiry ere it could be reported in what extent they could be obeyed.

If this were the case, it was the rash indulgence of a groundless hope. The Emperor Alexander refused to hear of any negotiation for peace, and took no other notice of that which had been transmitted to him by Wolkonsky, than to pass a censure on the Russian officers concerned, and Prince Kutousof himself, for having had the least intercourse with the French generals. He reminded the

generalissimo how positive his instructions had been on this subject, and that he had enjoined him on no account to enter into negotiations or correspondence with the invaders, and he revived and enforced his injunctions to that effect.

The sagacious general was not, it is to be supposed, greatly affected by a rebuke which was only given for form's sake. He made his soldiers acquainted with the Emperor's unalterable resolution to give no terms to the invaders, and spreading through the camp, at the same time, the news of the victory at Salamanca, and the evacuation of Madrid, pointed out to them, that Frenchmen, like others, were liable to defeat, and called on his soldiers to emulate the courage of the British, and patriotism of the Spaniards. While the minds of the soldiery were thus excited and encouraged, Kutousof took measures for anticipating Napoleon, by putting an end to the armistice, and assuming an offensive posture.

CHAPTER XII.

Murat's Armistice broken off—He is attacked and defeated.—Napoleon leaves Moscow on 19th October.—Bloody skirmish at Mala-Yarowslavetz.—Napoleon in great danger while reconnoitring.—He retreats to Vereia, where he meets Mortier and the Young Guard.—Winzengerode made prisoner, and insulted by Buonaparte.—The Kremlin is blown up by the French.—Napoleon continues his retreat towards Poland—Its Horrors.—Conflict near Wiazma, on 3d November, where the French lose 4,000 men—Cross the river Wiazma during the night.—Proceedings of the Viceroy of Italy—He reaches Smolensk, in great distress, on the 13th—Buonaparte arrives at Smolensk, with the headmost division of the Grand Army.—Sketch of the calamitous Retreat of Ney's Division.—The whole French Army now collected at Smolensk.—Retrospect of proceedings on the extreme flanks of Napoleon's line of advance.—Cautious conduct of Prince Schwartzenberg.—Winzengerode freed on his road to Paris, by a body of Cossacks.—Tchitchagoff occupies Minsk on 14th November, and Lambert, one of his Generals, captures Borizoff, after severe fighting.—Perilous situation of Napoleon.

It was easy to make Murat himself the active person in breaking off the armistice, a step which the Russian general preferred, lest a

formal intimation of rupture on his own side might lead the King of Naples to suspect his further purpose. Accordingly, a Cossack having fired his carabine when Murat was examining the advanced guards, irritated, as it was designed to do, that fiery soldier, and induced him to announce to the Russian generals that the armistice was ended. The Russians were the first to commence hostilities.

The camp, or position, which Murat occupied, Worodonow, was covered on the right, and on the centre, by a rivulet or brook, running in a deep ravine; but the stream taking another direction, left a good part of the left wing uncovered, which was at the same time exposed to surprise from a wood covering a little plain where his left rested. The sum of Murat's force, which consisted of the cavalry, and Poniatowski's division, was computed to be upwards of thirty thousand. It is singular that since the King of Naples expected an attack, as was intimated by his letter to his brother-in-law, he did not take the precaution of placing videttes and advanced guards in the woody plain. But the French, from their long train of success, were accustomed to despise their enemies, and to consider a surprise as a species of affront which they were never to be exposed to

The Russians had laid a plan, which, had it been dexterously executed, must have destroy-

ed the whole French advanced guard. An attack upon the left of Murat's position, by two Russian columns, under Count Orloff-Dennizoff, was completely successful; but two other columns, by whom he should have been supported, did not arrive in time upon the point of action; the Poles, under Poniatowski, made a glorious defence upon the right, and the van-guard was saved from utter destruction. But there was a complete defeat; the King of Naples lost his cannon, his position, and his baggage, had two thousand men killed, and lost fifteen hundred prisoners. The French cavalry, except a few of those belonging to the guard, might be said to be utterly destroyed. Every thing which the Russians saw in the enemies' camp convinced them of the distress to which the French were reduced. Flayed cats and horse-flesh were the dainties found in the King of Naples' kitchen.

It was the 18th of October when first the noise of the cannon, and soon after, the arrival of an officer, brought intelligence of this mishap to Buonaparte. His energy of character, which had appeared to slumber during the days he had spent in a species of irresolution at Moscow, seemed at once restored. He poured forth, without hesitation, a torrent of orders suited for the occasion, directing the march of the troops to support Murat at Worodonow. Notwithstanding the miscellaneous

variety of directions, each was distinct in itself, yet critically connected with the others, so as to form, on the whole, a perfect and well connected plan of movements. Part of the army marched that night; the rest had their route for the next morning. A garrison, under Mareschal Mortier, was left as a rear-guard in the Kremlin; from which it may be inferred that Napoleon did not as yet intend a final retreat.

On the 19th October, before day-break, the Emperor in person left Moscow, after an abode of thirty-four days. «Let us march,» he said, on Kalouga, and woe to those who shall oppose us.» In this brief sentence he announced the whole plan of his retreat, which was to defeat the army of Kutousof, or compel him to retire, and then himself to return to the frontiers of Poland, by the unwasted route of Kalouga, Medyn, Ynkowo, Elnia, and Smolensk.

The French army, which now filed from the gates of Moscow, and which continued to move on in a living mass for many hours, comprehended about one hundred and twenty thousand men, indifferently well appointed, and marching in good order. They were followed by no less than five hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, a train beyond proportion to their numbers, and two thousand artillery waggons. So far the march had a martial and imposing

aspect. But in the rear of these came a confused crowd of many thousands, consisting of followers of the camp, stragglers who had rejoined it, and prisoners, many of them employed in carrying, or driving forward in wheelbarrows, the spoil of the conquerors.

Among these were French families formerly inhabitants of Moscow, and composing what was called the French colony there, who could no longer reckon upon it as a safe place of abode, and who took the opportunity of returning with their countrymen. There was, besides, a mixture and confusion of all imaginable kind of carriages, charged with the baggage of the army, and with the spoils of Moscow, as well those trophies which Napoleon had seized upon to amuse the Parisians as what had been seized by individuals. This miscellaneous crowd resembled, according to Ségur, a horde of Tartars returning from a successful invasion.

There were, as has been said, three routes from Moscow to Kalouga. The central, or old road, was that upon which the Russians lay encamped at their grand position of Taroutino, and in front of it was that of Worodonow, or Ynkowo, where they had so lately defeated Murat. Napoleon advanced a day's march on this route, in order to induce Kutousof to believe that he proposed to attack his army in front; but this was only a feint.

for, on the next day, he turned off by cross-roads into the eastern, or new road to Kalouga, with the view of advancing by that route until he should be past the Russian camp at Taroutino, on the right flank, and then of again crossing from the new road to the old one, and thus getting possession of Borowsk and Mala-Yarowslavetz, towns on the same road to the southward of Taroutino. Thus the Russian position would be turned and avoided, while the main body of the French Emperor would be interposed betwixt Kutousof and Kalouga, and the fertile southern provinces laid open to supply his army.

On the 23d, the Emperor with his main body attained Borowsk, and learned that the division of Delzons, which formed his vanguard, had occupied Mala-Yarowslavetz without opposition. Thus far all seemed to have succeeded according to Napoleon's wish.

But Kutousof, so soon as he was aware of the danger in which he stood of being cut off from Kalouga, retaliated upon Napoleon his own manœuvre, and detached Generals Doktoroff and Raefskoi to the southward with a strong division, to outmarch the French, and occupy the position of Mala-Yarowslavetz, or to regain it if it was taken He himself, breaking up his camp at Taroutino, followed with his whole army by the road of Lectazowo, and

marched so rapidly as to outstrip the French army, and reach the southward of Mala-Yarowslavetz, and consequently again interpose himself between Napoleon and Kalouga.

Mala-Yarowslavetz offers a strong position. The town is built on a rapid declivity, broken with cliffs, the bottom of which is washed by the river Louja. On the northern side of the Louja, and connected with the town by a bridge, is a small plain with some huts, where Delzons' army bivouacked, having stationed two battalions to defend the town, and to watch the motions of the enemy. About four in the morning, when all were asleep, save the few sentinels who kept a careless watch, the Russians rushed into the place with dreadful outcries, drove the two battalions out of the town, and pushed them down the declivity and across the Louja to their main body. The noise of the artillery drew the attention of Eugène the Viceroy, who being only about three leagues from the scene of action, arrived there about the dawn. The soldiers of Delzons' division were then discovered struggling to regain the southern bank on which the town was situated. Encouraged by the approach of Eugène, Delzons pushed forward across the bridge, repelled the Russians, gained the middle of the village, and was shot dead. His brother, who endeavoured to drag the general's body from the spot, incurred the

same fate. General Guilleminot succeeded to the command, and threw a strong party of French into the church, which served as a citadel during the continuance of the action. The Russians rushed in once more, and drove Guilleminot back to the bridge. He was, however, succoured by Prince Eugène, who, after various less serious attempts, directed a whole division on the town.

Mala-Yarowslavetz was then recovered by the French, but, on reconnoitring a little farther, the whole of Kutousof's army appeared on the plain beyond it, upwards of 100,000 men in number, and already possessed of a good position, which they were improving by entrenchments. Reinforcements from the Russian ranks immediately attacked the French, who were driven back on the town, which, being composed of wooden huts, was now in flames, and the French were again dispossessed of Mala-Yarowslavetz. The miserable ruins of this place were five times won and lost. At length, as the main body of the Grand Army came up under Napoleon himself, he found the French still in possession of the disputed village and its steep bank. But beyond them lay the numerous Russian army stationed and entrenched, supported by a very large train of artillery, and seeming to render a battle absolutely indispensable to dislodge them from the position they had taken, and

the fortifications with which they had secured themselves.

A council of war was held in the head-quarters of the Emperor, the hut of a poor weaver, divided by a screen, which served as the only partition. Here he received and meditated upon the reports of his generals, together with their opinions, and learned, to his distress, that Bessières, and other good officers, reported that the position occupied by Kutousof was unassailable. He resolved to judge with his own eyes on the next day, and in the mean time turned a negligent ear to the reports which informed him that the Cossacks were stealing through the woods, and insinuating themselves betwixt him and his advanced guard.

At dawning Napoleon mounted his horse, in order to reconnoitre, and incurred in the attempt a great risk of his life or freedom. It was about day-break, when, as attended by his staff and orderly soldiers, he crossed the little plain on the northern side of the Louja in order to gain the bridge, the level ground was suddenly filled with fugitives, in the rear of whom appeared some black masses. At first, the cries they made seemed to be those of *Vive l'Empereur*, but the wild hourra of the Cossacks, and the swiftness of their advance, soon announced the children of the desert. « It is the Cossacks,» said Rapp, seizing the reins of

the Emperor's bridle «You must turn back.» Napoleon refused to retreat, drew his sword, as did his attendants, and placed themselves on the highway. Rapp's horse was wounded, and borne down by one of these lancers; but the Emperor and his suite preserved their liberty by standing their ground, while the cloud of Cossacks, more intent on plunder than prisoners, past them within lance's length, without observing the inestimable prey which was within their grasp, and threw themselves upon some carriages which were more attractive The arrival of the cavalry of the guard cleared the plain of this desultory but venturous and pertinacious enemy; and Napoleon proceeded to cross the river and ascend the further bank, for the purpose of reconnoitring. In the mean time, the audacity of the Cossacks in their retreat was equal to the wild character of their advance. They halted between the intervals of the French cavalry to load their pistols and carabines, perfectly secure that if pressed, their horses, at a touch of the whip which is attached to their bridle, would outstrip the exhausted chargers of the French Imperial Guard.

When the plain was attained, Napoleon saw on the front, and barring the road to Kalouga, Kutousof, strongly posted with upwards of 100,000 men, and on the right, Platoff and six thousand Cossacks, with artillery. To this be-

longed the pulk which he had just encountered, and who were returning from the flanks of his line, loaded with booty, while others seemed to meditate a similar attack. He returned to his miserable head-quarters, after having finished his reconnoitring party.

A second council of war was held, in which Buonaparte, having heard the conflicting opinions of Murat, who gave his advice for attacking Kutousof, and of Davoust, who considered the position of the Russian general as one which, covering a long succession of defiles, might be defended inch by inch, at length found himself obliged to decide between the angry chiefs, and with a grief which seemed to deprive him of his senses for a little while, gave the unusual orders—to retreat. Buonaparte's own personal experience had convinced him how much, in advancing, his flanks would be exposed to the Hettman and his Cossacks, who had mustered in great force in the neighbourhood of Medyn. Other intelligence informed him that his rear had been attacked by another body of Cossacks coming from Twer, and who belonged not to Kutousof's army, but to another Russian division under the command of Winzengerode, which was advancing from the northward to re-occupy Moscow. This showed that the communications of the French were at the enemy's mercy on the west and the north, on flank and in

rear, and seems to have determined the Emperor to give at length, and most reluctantly, the orders to retreat, for the purpose of returning to the frontiers by Vereia and Wiazma, the same road by which they had advanced.

It was very seldom that Napoleon resigned the settled purpose of his own mind, either to the advice of those around him, or to any combination of opposing circumstances. He usually received any objection founded on the difficulty of executing his orders, with an evasive answer, «*Ah, on ne peut pas!*» which, from the sarcastic mode in which he uttered the words, plainly showed that he imputed the alleged impossibility to the imbecility of the officer who used the apology. It might have been better for Napoleon, in many instances, had he somewhat abated this pertinacity of disposition; and yet it happened, that by yielding with unwonted docility to the advice of his generals upon the present occasion, he actually retreated at the very moment when the Grand Russian army were withdrawing from the position in which Davoust had pronounced them unassailable. The reason of this retrograde movement, which involved the most serious risk, and which, had Napoleon been aware of it, might have yielded him access to the most fertile and unharassed provinces of Russia, was said to be

Kutousof's fears that the French, moving from their right flank, might have marched round the Russian army by the way of Medyn. The truth seems to be, that Kutousof, though placed in command of the Grand Army, in order to indulge the soldiers with a general action, was slow and cautious by nature, and rendered more so by his advanced age. He forgot, that in war, to gain brilliant results, or even to prevent great reverses, some risks must be run; and having received just praise for his practised and cautious movements from the battle of Borodino till that of Mala-Yarowslavetz, he now carried the qualities of prudence and circumspection to the extreme, and shunned a general action, or rather the hazard of a general attack from the French, when he might certainly have trusted, first, in the chance (which turned out the reality) of Buonaparte's retreat; secondly, in the courage of his troops, and the strength of his position. « But Fortune, » says Tacitus, « has the chief influence on warlike events; » and she so ordered it, that both the hostile armies retired at once. So that while Buonaparte retreated towards Borowsk and Vereia, the route by which he had advanced, the Russians were leaving open before him the road to Kalouga, to gain which he had fought, and fought in vain, the bloody battle of Mala-Yarowslavetz. Favoured, however, by their immense clouds

of light cavalry. the Russians learned the retrograde movement of Napoleon long before he could have any certain knowledge of theirs; and in consequence, manœuvred from their left so as to approach the points of Wiazma and Gjatz, by which the French must needs pass, if they meant to march on Smolensk.

At Vereia, where Napoleon had his head-quarters on the 29th October, he had the satisfaction to meet with Mortier, and that part of the Young Guard which had garrisoned the Kremlin. They brought with them an important prisoner, whom chance, or rather his own imprudence, had thrown into their hands. We have said incidentally, that upon the French army evacuating Moscow, Winzengerode, with a considerable body of forces advanced from the Twer to regain possession of the city. All was vacant and silent, except where the French garrison lay deserted and moody in the Kremlin, with a few detached outposts. Winzengerode, with a single aide-de-camp, rode imprudently forward, and both were seized by the French soldiers. The general waved a white handkerchief, and claimed the privilege of a flag of truce, alleging that he came to summon the French marshal to surrender. But Mortier refused him the privilege he claimed, observing, plausibly, that it was not the custom of general officers to summon garrisons in person.

Before leaving Moscow, the French, by the especial command of Napoleon, prepared to blow up the ancient palace of the Czars. As the Kremlin was totally useless as a fortification, even if Napoleon could have hoped ever to return to Moscow as a victor, this act of wanton mischief can only be imputed to a desire to do something personally displeasing to Alexander, because he had been found to possess a firmer character than his former friend had anticipated. The mode of executing this mandate, which, however, should be probably ascribed to the engineers, was a piece of additional barbarity. Aware that some of the Russians who were left behind, men of the lowest rank and habits, would crowd in to plunder the palace when the French retreated, they attached long slow-matches to the gunpowder which was stored in the vaults of the palace, and lighted them when the rear of the French column marched out. The French were but at a short distance, when the explosion took place, which laid a considerable part of the Kremlin in ruins, and destroyed at the same time, in mere wantonness, a number of wretches, whom curiosity or love of plunder had, as was anticipated, induced to crowd within the palace. The Russian troops poured in, destroyed the mines which had not yet exploded, and extinguished the fire which had already caught the building

The patriotic foresight of the Russian peasants was now made manifest. We have mentioned the extreme wants of the French in the desolate city. No sooner was the Russian flag hoisted, than these wants vanished, as if by magic. Eighteen hundred cars, loaded with bread, poured in from the neighbourhood, on the very day that saw Moscow re-occupied. The bread, and the mode of conveying it, had been in secret prepared by those rustic patriots.

We return to the movements of the French army.

The dreadful explosion of the Kremlin shook the ground like an earthquake, and announced to Napoleon, then on his march against Kutousof, that his commands had been obeyed. On the next day, a bulletin announced in a triumphant tone that the Kremlin, coeval with the Russian monarchy, *had existed*, and that Moscow was now but an impure laystall, while «the two hundred thousand persons which once formed her population wandered through the forests, subsisting on wild roots, or perishing for want of them. With yet more audacity, the same official annunciation represents the retreat of the French as an advance on the road to victory «The army expects to be put in motion on the 24th, to gain the Dwina, and to assume a position which will place it eighty leagues

nearer to St Petersburgh and to Wilna; a double advantage, since it will bring us nearer the mark we aim at, and the means by which it may be accomplished.» While such splendid figments were circulated for the satisfaction of the people of Paris, the real question was, not whether the French were to approach St Petersburgh, but by what means they were to get out of Russia with the semblance of an army remaining together.

Napoleon's spirit was observed to be soured by the result of the affair at Mala-Yarowslavetz. It was indeed an operation of the last consequence, since it compelled a broken and suffering army to retreat through a country already wasted by their own advance, and by the acts of the Russians, where the houses were burnt, the inhabitants fled, and the roads broken up, instead of taking the road by Kalouga, through a region which offered both the means of subsistence and shelter. When the advanced season of the year was considered, it might be said that the retreat upon Vereia sounded the death-knell of the French army. These melancholy considerations did not escape Buonaparte himself, though he endeavoured to disguise them from others, by asserting, in a bulletin dated from Borowsk, that the country around was extremely rich, might be compared to the best parts of France and Germany, and that the weather reminded

the troops of the sun and the delicious climate of Fontainebleau. His temper was visibly altered. Among other modes of venting his displeasure, he bitterly upbraided his prisoner Winzengerode, who was then brought before him.—« Who are you? » he said—« A man without a country!—You have ever been my enemy—You were in the Austrian ranks when I fought against them—I have become Austria's friend, and I find you in those of Russia —You have been a warm instigator of the war, nevertheless, you are a native of the Confederation of the Rhine—you are my subject—you are a rebel—Seize on him, gendarmes!—Let him be brought to trial! »

To this threat, which showed that Napoleon accounted the States of the Confederacy not as appertaining in sovereignty to the princes whose names they bore, but as the immediate subjects of France, from whom the French Emperor was entitled to expect direct fealty, Napoleon added other terms of abuse; and called Winzengerode an English hireling and incendiary, while he behaved with civility to his aide-de-camp Narishkin, a native Russian. This violence, however, had no other consequence than that of the dismissal of Winzengerode, a close prisoner, to Lithuania, to be from thence forwarded to Paris. The presence of a captive of rank and reputation, an aide-de-camp of the Emperor of Russia, was

designed of course to give countenance to the favourable accounts which Napoleon might find it convenient to circulate on the events of the campaign. It was not, however, Winzengerode's fortune to make this disagreeable journey. He was, as will be hereafter mentioned, released in Lithuania, when such an event was least to be hoped for.

Accounts had been received, tending to confirm the opinion that the Russian army were moving on Medyn, with the obvious purpose of intercepting the French army, or at least harassing their passage at Wiazma or at Ghjatz. By the orders of Napoleon, therefore, the army pressed forward on the last-named town. They marched on in three corps d'armée. Napoleon was with the first of these armies. The second was commanded by the Viceroy of Italy, Prince Eugène. The third, which was destined to act as a rear-guard, was led by Davoust, whose love of order and military discipline might be, it was hoped, some check upon the license and confusion of such a retreat. It was designed that one day's march should intervene between the movements of each of these bodies, to avoid confusion, and to facilitate the collecting subsistence; being a delay of two, or at most three days, betwixt the operations of the advanced guard and that of the rear.

It has been often asked, nor has the ques-

tion ever been satisfactorily answered, why Napoleon preferred that his columns should thus creep over the same ground in succession, instead of the more combined and rapid mode of marching by three columns in front, by which he would have saved time, and increased, by the breadth of country which the march occupied, the means of collecting subsistence. The impracticability of the roads cannot be alleged, because the French army had come thither arranged in three columns, marching to the front abreast of each other, which was the reverse of their order in the retreat.

In the road, the army passed Borodino, the scene of the grand battle which exhibited so many vestiges of the French prowess, and of the loss they had sustained. This, the most sanguinary conflict of modern times, had been entirely without adequate advantages to the victors. The momentary possession of Moscow had annihilated every chance of an essential result by the catastrophe which followed, and the army which had been victorious at Borodino, was now escaping from their conquests, surrounded by danger on every hand, and already disorganized on many points, by danger, pain, and privation. At the convent of Kolotskoi, which had been the grand hospital of the French after the battle, many of the wounded were found still

alive, though thousands more had perished for want of materials necessary for surgical treatment, food of suitable quality, bandages, and the like. The survivors crawled to the door, and extended their supplicating hands to their countrymen as they passed onwards on their weary march. By Napoleon's orders, such of the patients as were able to bear being moved were placed on the suttlers' carts, while the rest were left in the convent, together with some wounded Russian prisoners, whose presence, it was hoped, might be a protection to the French.

Several of those who had been placed in the carriages did not travel very far. The sordid wretches to whom the carts and wains, loaded with the plunder of Moscow, belonged, got rid in many cases of the additional burden imposed on them, by lagging behind the column of march in desolate places, and murdering the men entrusted to their charge. In other parts of the column, the Russian prisoners were seen lying on the road, their brains shot out by the soldiers appointed to guard them, but who took this mode of freeing themselves of the trouble. It is thus that a continued course of calamity renders men's minds selfish, ravenous, and fiendish, indifferent to what evil they inflict, because it can scarce equal that which they endure; as divines say of the condemned spirits, that they

are urged to malevolent actions against men, by a consciousness of their own state of reprobation

Napoleon, with his first division of the Grand Army, reached Gjatz without any other inconvenience than arose from the state of the roads, and the distresses of the soldiery From Gjatz he advanced in two marches to Wiazma, and halted there to allow Prince Eugene and Marshal Davoust to come up, who had fallen five days' march to the rear, instead of three days only, as had been directed On the 1st November, the Emperor again resumed his painful retreat, leaving, however, the corps of Ney at Wiazma to reinforce and relieve the rear-guard under Davoust, who, he concluded, must be worn out with the duty He resumed with his Old Guard the road to Dorogobouje, on which town he thought it probable the Russians might be moving to cut him off, and it was most important to prevent them

Another order of Napoleon's confirms his sense of the danger which had now begun to oppress him He commanded the spoils of Moscow, ancient armour, cannon, and the great cross of Ivan, to be thrown into the lake of Semelin, as trophies which he was unwilling to restore, and unable to carry off Some of the artillery, which the unfed horses were unable to drag forward, were also now

necessarily left behind, though the circumstance was not communicated in every instance to Napoleon, who, bred in the artillery department, cherished, like many officers of that branch of service, a sort of superstitious reverence for his guns.

The Emperor, and the van-guard of his army, had hitherto passed unopposed. It was not so with the centre and rear. They were attacked, during the whole course of that march, by clouds of Cossacks, bringing with them a species of light artillery mounted on sledges, which, keeping pace with their motions, threw showers of balls among the columns of the French, while the menaced charge of these irregular cavalry frequently obliged the march to halt, that the men might form lines or squares to protect themselves. The passage of streams where the bridges were broken down, and the horses and waggons were overturned on the precipitous banks, or in the miry fords, and where drivers and horses dropped down exhausted, added to this confusion when such obstacles occurred. The two divisions, however, having as yet seen no regular forces, passed the night of the 2d November in deceitful tranquillity, within two leagues of Wiazma, where Ney was lying ready to join them.

In that fatal night, Miloradowitch, one of the boldest, most enterprising, and active of

the Russian generals, and whom the French were wont to call the Russian Murat, arrived with the van-guard of the Russian regulars, supported by Platoff and many thousand Cossacks, and being the harbinger of Kutousof, and the whole grand army of Russia.

The old Russian general, when he learned the French Emperor's plan of retiring by Gjatz and Wiazma, instantly turning his own retreat into a movement to the left, arrived by cross roads from Mala-Yarowslavetz. The Russians now reached the point of action at day-break, pushed through Prince Eugène's line of march, and insulated his van-guard, while the Cossacks rode like a whirlwind among the host of stragglers and followers of the army, and drove them along the plain at the lance's point. The Viceroy was succoured by a regiment which Ney, though himself hardly pressed, dispatched to his aid from Wiazma, and his rear-guard was disengaged by the exertions of Davoust, who marched hastily forward to extricate them. The Russian artillery, which is superior in calibre, and carries farther than the French, manœuvred with rapidity, and kept up a tremendous cannonade, to which the French had no adequate means of replying. Eugène and Davoust made a most gallant defence; yet they would not have been able to maintain their ground, had Kutousof, as was to have been

expected, either come up in person, or sent a strong detachment to support his van-guard.

The battle lasted from seven in the morning till towards evening, when Eugène and Davoust pushed through Wiazma with the remains of their divisions, pursued by and almost mingled with the Russians, whose army marched into the town at the charging step, with drums beating, and all the indications of victory. The French divisions, under cover of the night, and having passed the river (which, like the town, is called Wiazma), established themselves in obscurity and comparative safety upon the left bank. The day had been disastrous to the French arms, though their honour remained unsullied. They had lost about four thousand men, their regiments were mouldered down to battalions, their battalions to companies, their companies to weak picquets.

All tacticians agree, that if Kutousof had reinforced Miloradowitch, as warmly urged by Sir Robert Wilson, or if he had forced the town of Wiazma, which his numbers might have enabled him to do, both the centre and rear divisions of Napoleon's force, and probably the troops under Ney also, must have been inevitably cut off. But the aged general confided in the approach of the Russian winter, and declined to purchase, by the blood of his countrymen, a victory of which he held him-

self secured by the climate. The French were so far from any place where they could procure either food or shelter; they were so hemmed in, and confined to the desolated high-roads, which every column as it passed rendered more impracticable to the rest, that he refused to gain, at the sword's point, advantages which he deemed himself sure of possessing without effort. Determined, therefore, to avoid a general battle, yet to maintain his advantages over the French by manœuvring, Kutousof, turning a deaf ear to the remonstrances, and even threats, of those who differed in opinion from him, removed his head-quarters to Krasnoi, leaving to Miloradowitch the duty of beating up the rear of the French on their retreat, by following the course of the high-road, while the Hettman Platoff, flanking the French march with his Cossacks, took advantage of every opportunity to distress them.

In the mean while, the Viceroy received orders from Napoleon to abandon the straight road to Smolensk, which was the route of the corps of Davoust and Ney, and to move northward on Dowkhowtchina and Poreczie, to afford countenance and support to Mareschal Oudinot, now understood to be hard pressed by Witgenstein, who, as we shall presently see, had regained the superiority in the north of Russia. The Viceroy, in obedience to this

order, began his march on the new route which was enjoined him, by marching himself upon Zasselie, closely pursued, watched, and harassed by his usual Scythian attendants. He was compelled to leave behind him sixty-four pieces of cannon; and these, with three thousand stragglers, fell into the prompt grasp of the pursuers.

A large cloud of Cossacks, with Platoff at their head, accompanied the movements of the Viceroy and his Italian army. Whoever strayed from the column was inevitably their prey. Eugène passed a night at Zasselie, without having as yet encountered any great misfortune. But in advancing from thence to Dowkhowtchina, the French had to cross the Wop, a river swelled by rains, while the passage to the ford was steep and frozen. Here the Viceroy passed over his infantry with great difficulty, but was obliged to abandon twenty-three pieces of cannon and all his baggage to the Cossacks. The unhappy Italians, wetted from head to foot, were compelled to pass a miserable night in bivouac upon the other side; and many expired there, whose thoughts, when perishing so miserably, must have been on their own mild climate and delicious country. Next day, the shivering, half-naked, and persecuted column reached Dowkhowtchina, where they expected some relief; but their first welcome was from a fresh swarm of Cos-

sacks, which rushed out from the gates with cannon. These were the advanced corps of the troops which had occupied Moscow, and were now pressing westward where their services were more necessary.

Notwithstanding their opposition, Prince Eugène forced his way into the place with much gallantry, and took up quarters for the night. But having lost his baggage, the greater part of his artillery and ammunition, besides the utter destruction of his cavalry, he saw no prospect of being able to march forward to Vitepsk to support Oudinot, nor was he in a condition to have afforded him assistance, even if he had been in communication. In this situation of distress, the Viceroy determined to rejoin the Grand Army, and for that purpose marched upon Wlodimerowa, and from thence to Smolensk, where, harassed by the Cossacks, he arrived in a miserable condition upon the 13th of November, having fallen in with Mareschal Ney upon his march, as we shall afterwards mention.

The Emperor, in the mean time, had halted at Stakawo during the 3d and 4th November. On the 5th he slept at Dorogobouje.

On the 6th November commenced that terrible Russian winter, of which the French had not yet experienced the terrors, although the weather had been cold, frosty, and threatening. No sun was visible, and the dense and murky

fog which hung on the marching column was changed into a heavy fall of snow in large broad flakes, which at once chilled and blinded the soldiers. The march, however, stumbled forward, the men struggling, and at last sinking, in the holes and ravines which were concealed from them by the new and disguised appearance of the face of nature. Those who yet retained discipline and their ranks stood some chance of receiving assistance, but amid the mass of the stragglers, men's hearts, intent upon self-preservation, became hardened and closed against every feeling of sympathy and compassion, the sentiments of which are sometimes excluded by the selfishness of prosperity, but are almost always destroyed by the egotism of general and overwhelming misfortune. A stormy wind also began to arise, and whirl the snow from the earth, as well as that from the heavens, into dizzy eddies around the soldiers' heads. There were many hurled to the earth in this manner, where the same snows furnished them with an instant grave, under which they were concealed until the next summer came, and displayed their ghastly remains in the open air. A great number of slight hillocks on each side of the road, intimated, in the mean while, the fate of these unfortunate men.

There was only the word Smolensk, which, echoed from man to man, served as a talisman

to keep up the spirits of the soldiers. The troops had been taught to repeat that name, as indicating the place where they were once more to be welcomed to plenty and repose. It was counted upon as a dépôt of stores for the army, especially of such supplies as they had outstripped by their forced marches, first on Wilna, and afterwards on Moscow. They were now falling back, as was hoped and trusted, upon these resources, and continued their march with tolerable spirit, which even the snow-storm could not entirely depress. They reckoned also upon a reinforcement of 30,000 men under Victor, who were waiting their arrival at Smolensk; but a concourse of evil tidings had made the services of that division necessary elsewhere.

On the same fatal 6th of November, Buonaparte received intelligence of two events, both of deep import, and which corresponded but too well with the storms around him. The one was the singular conspiracy of Mallet, so remarkable for its temporary success, and its equally sudden discomfiture. This carried his mind to Paris, with the conviction that all could not be well with an empire where such an explosion could so nearly attain success. On the other hand, his thoughts were recalled to his present situation by the unpleasing intelligence that Witgenstein had assumed the offensive, beaten St-Cyr, taken Polotsk and

Vitepsk, and re-occupied the whole line of the Dwina. Here was an unexpected obstacle to his retreat, which he endeavoured to remove by ordering Victor to move from Smolensk with the division just mentioned, and instantly to drive Witgenstein behind the Dwina;—not perhaps considering with sufficient accuracy whether the force which his marshal commanded was equal to the task.

Similar bad news came from other quarters. Four demi-brigades of recruits from France had arrived at Smolensk. Baraguay d'Hilliers, their general, had, by command from Buonaparte, sent forward these troops towards Elnia, intimating at the time that they should clear the road towards Kalouga, by which last town he then expected the Emperor to approach Smolensk. As Napoleon was excluded from the Kalouga road, these troops, as no longer useful at Elnia, ought to have been drawn back on Smolensk; but Baraguay d'Hilliers had no certain information of this change of route. The consequence was, that the celebrated Russian partisans, Orloff-Dennizoff, Davidoff, Seslavin, and others, surprised these raw troops in their cantonments, and made them all prisoners, to the number of better than two thousand men. Other detachments of the French about the same time fell into the hands of the Russians.

At length the longed-for Smolensk was

visible. At the sight of its strong walls and lofty towers, the whole stragglers of the army, which now included treble the number of those who kept their ranks, rushed headlong to the place. But instead of giving them ready admission, their countrymen in the town shut the gates against them with horror; for their confused and irregular state, their wild, dirty, and unshaved appearance, their impatient cries for entrance,—above all, their emaciated forms, and starved, yet ferocious aspects,—made them to be regarded rather as banditti than soldiers. At length, the Imperial Guards arrived and were admitted; the miscellaneous crowd rushed in after them. To the Guards, and some few others who had kept order, rations were regularly delivered, but the mass of stragglers, being unable to give any account of themselves or their regiments, or to bring with them a responsible officer, died, many of them, while they besieged in vain the doors of the magazines. Such was the promised distribution of food—the promised quarters were nowhere to be found. Smolensk, as is already recorded, had been burnt by the Russians, and no other covering was to be had than was afforded by miserable sheds reared against such blackened walls as remained yet standing. But even this was shelter and repose, compared to the exposed bivouac on wreaths of snow; and as the straggling soldiers were compelled by hunger

to unite themselves once more with their regiments, they at length obtained their share in the regular distribution of rations, and an approach towards order and discipline began to prevail in the headmost division of the Grand Army of France.

The central part of the army, under Davoust, who had relinquished the rear-guard to Ney, continued to advance from Wiazma to Dorogobouje; but at this point his distress became extreme, from the combined influence of the storm, the enemy, and the disheartened condition of men driven from their standards by want of food, searching for it in vain, and afterwards unable from weakness to resume their ranks. Many fell into the hands of the incensed peasants, by whom they were either killed, or stripped naked and driven back to the high-road.

The rear-guard, under Ney, suffered yet more than these. Every house had been burnt before their arrival, and their sufferings from the enemy were the severer, that they were the last French whom they had to work their revenge upon. Yet Ney continued to evince a degree of personal firmness and resolution which has been rarely witnessed. At the passage of the Dnieper, he was attacked by the enemy, and all was nearly lost in one general confusion, when the mareschal, seizing a musket to encourage the few men who could

be brought to act, succeeded, against all the hopes of the Russians, and equally against the despairing calculations of the French, in bringing over a part of his rear-guard. But he lost on this fatal spot a great part of his artillery, and a great number of his soldiers. We can give only one unvarying sketch of Ney's dreadful retreat. On every point he was attacked by the same wasting, wearying warfare, and every cessation from fighting was necessarily employed in pushing forward towards Smolensk, which he was approaching on the 13th of November, when suddenly the hills to his left were covered with a disorderly mob of fugitives, whom a band of Cossacks were pursuing and slaughtering at pleasure. Having succeeded in dispersing the Cossacks, the next apparition was that of the army of Italy, to which the flying stragglers belonged. This corps d'armée was on its return, as the reader is aware, from Dowkhowtchina towards Smolensk, and was as usual severely pushed at every step by the Cossacks. The passage of the Wop had stripped the soldiers of baggage, provisions such as they had, and artillery and cavalry. They kept their march, however, with sufficient regularity. It was only the stragglers whom the Cossacks chased before them, and wounded, took, and slew at pleasure.

These wretched fugitives no sooner saw Ney's army, than they flew to shelter themselves

under its protection, and by doing so communicated their own terror to the mareschal's ranks. All, both stragglers and soldiers, began to hurry towards the Dwina, over which was a bridge, which their numbers soon choked up. Great loss was sustained, until Eugène and the indefatigable Ney again presented a defensive front, and repelled the assailants, who had again gathered around them. They were so near Smolensk, that Napoleon could send them refreshments and succour during the action. The Viceroy and Ney at length extricated themselves from their persecutors, and entered Smolensk, where Davoust had before found refuge. Napoleon allowed his army, which was now entirely collected, five days to consume such supplies as were to be found in Smolensk, and to prepare for the terrors of a farther retreat. But though such a delay was indispensable, the evil news which continued to arrive from every quarter, positively prohibited the prolonging this period of repose. It is now necessary to trace more particularly the incidents which had taken place on the extreme flanks of Napoleon's line of advance, on both of which, as we have already intimated, the Russians, powerfully reinforced, had assumed the offensive, with the apparent purpose of forming a communication with each other, and acting in con-

junction, to intercept the retreat of the Grand Army.

Upon the 18th of August, St-Cyr having beaten Witgenstein, and taken Polotsk, the war had languished in that quarter. The French army lay in an entrenched camp, well secured with barracks for shelter, and fortifications for defence. But in the partisan war which they carried on for two months, St-Cyr's army sustained great loss, while that of Witgenstein was more than doubled by the arrival of recruits. Finally, General Steingel, with two divisions of the Russian army from Finland, amounting to 15,000, landed at Riga, and. after some inefficient movements against Macdonald, marched to the support of Witgenstein. The Russian general, thus reinforced, began to act on the offensive with great vigour. On the 17th of October, the French outposts were driven into their entrenched camp at Polotsk. On the 18th, the camp itself was furiously attacked, and the redoubts by which it was protected were taken and retaken several times. The French remained in possession of them, but St-Cyr was wounded, and his situation became very precarious. In fact, the next day, 19th October, the attack was renewed by Witgenstein on the right bank of the Dwina, while Steingel, advancing up the opposite bank, threatened to occupy Polotsk

and its bridge, and thus to enclose St-Cyr in the entrenched camp.

Fortunately for the French general, night and a thick mist enabled him to cross the river to the left bank, and thus to effect a retreat, which Steingel was unable to prevent. But besides the disasters of the loss of the camp, and of the important place of Polotsk, which the Russians occupied on the 20th October, discord broke out between the Bavarian General Wrede and St-Cyr. When the latter was wounded, the command naturally devolved in course upon the Bavarian; but the other French generals refused to submit to this substitution, and St-Cyr was obliged, in spite of his wounds, to continue to act as commander-in-chief. Wrede, in the mean while, assumed an independence of movement quite unusual in an auxiliary general, who was acting with a French mareschal; and, separating altogether from St-Cyr, fell back upon Vileika, near Wilna, and withdrew himself from action entirely.

The French division must have been cut off, had not Victor, who was then lying at Smolensk with a covering army of twenty-five thousand men, received, as lately mentioned, Napoleon's orders, dispatched on the 6th November, to advance and reinforce St-Cyr, who thus became once more superior to Witgenstein. Victor was under orders, however, to

run no unnecessary risk, but to keep as far as possible on the defensive; because it was to this army, and that under Schwartzenberg, that Napoleon in a great measure trusted to clear the way for his retreat, and prevent his being intercepted ere he gained the Polish frontiers. But when Witgenstein, even in the presence of Victor, took Vitepsk, and began to establish himself on the Dwina, Napoleon caused Oudinot, as a more enterprising soldier, to replace the Duke of Belluno; and ordered Eugène to move from Wiazma to Dowkhowtchina, for the purpose of reinforcing that army. Eugène's march, as we have formerly shown, was rendered useless, by his misfortune at crossing the river Wop; and he was compelled to move towards Smolensk, where he arrived in a most dilapidated condition.

In the mean time, Witgenstein received reinforcements, and not only kept Oudinot in complete check, but gradually advanced towards Borizoff, and threatened at that town, which lay directly in the course of Napoleon's retreat, to form a junction with the army of the Danube, which was marching northward with the same purpose of co-operation, and to the movements of which we have now to direct the reader's attention.

It has been mentioned, that General Tormazoff had, on the 12th of August, been defeated at Gorodeczna by the Austrians under

Schwartzenberg, and the French under Régnier, and that the Russians had fallen back beyond the Styr. Schwartzenberg, satisfied with this advantage, showed no vehement desire to complete the disaster of his enemy. The French go nigh to bring an accusation against him of treachery, which we do not believe. But his heart was not in the war. He was conscious, that the success of Alexander would improve the condition of Austria, as well as of Europe in general, and he fought no harder than was absolutely necessary to sustain the part of a general of an auxiliary army, who felt by no means disposed to assume the character of a principal combatant.

While Tormazoff and the Austrians watched each other upon the Styr, two smaller corps of Russians and Poles were making demonstrations in the same country. Prince Bagration, upon retreating from the banks of the Dwina, had not altogether deprived that neighbourhood of Russian troops. At Bobruisk he had left a considerable garrison, which had been blockaded first by the French cavalry under Latour Maubourg, and afterwards, when Latour Maubourg was summoned to join Napoleon, by the Polish General Dombrowski. The garrison was supported by a Russian corps under General Ertell. It was an instance of Napoleon's extreme unwillingness to credit any thing that contradicted his wishes, that he

persisted in believing, or desiring to have it believed, that the Russians on this point, which commanded still an access from Russia to Poland, were inferior to the Poles, whom he had opposed to them; and while Dombrowski was acting against Ertell, he overwhelmed the embarrassed general with repeated orders to attack and destroy the enemy, before whom he could scarce maintain his ground.

The armies were thus occupied, when Admiral Tchitchagoff, with fifty thousand Russians, whom the peace with the Turks permitted to leave Moldavia, advanced upon Volhynia, with the purpose of co-operating with Tormazoff and Ertell; and, finally, of acting in combination with Witgenstein, for intercepting Buonaparte's retreat.

On the 14th September, this important junction betwixt the armies of Tormazoff and Tchitchagoff was effected; and the Russian army, increased to 60,000 men, became superior to all the force, whether of French, Austrians, or Poles, which could be opposed to them. They crossed the Styr, and moved forward on the Duchy of Warsaw, while Schwartzenberg, not without loss, retreated to the banks of the Bug. His pursuers might have pressed on him still closer, but for the arrival of Prince Czernicheff, the aide-de-camp of the Emperor, who, escorted by a body of

chosen Cossacks, had executed a perilous march, in order to bring fresh orders to Tormazoff and Tchitchagoff. The former was directed to repair to the grand army, to occupy the situation formerly held by Prince Bagration, while the command of the united Volhynian army was devolved upon Admiral Tchitchagoff, who, to judge by subsequent events, does not seem to have been, on great emergencies, very well fitted for so important a trust.

Prince Czernicheff then set out with his band of Scythians, to carry to the army of Witgenstein tidings of the purposes and movements of that of Moldavia. The direct course between the Russian armies was held by the Franco-Austrian army. To escape this obstacle, Czernicheff took his course westwards, and, penetrating deep into Poland, made so long a circuit, as completely to turn the whole army of Schwartzenberg. Marching with extraordinary dispatch through the wildest and most secret paths, he traversed the interior of Poland, avoiding at once the unfriendly population and the numerous detachments of the enemy, and sustaining his cavalry, horses and men, in a way in which none but Cossacks, and Cossack horses, could have supported existence. We have good evidence, that this flying party, on one occa-

sion, travelled nearly one hundred English miles in twenty-four hours.

This extraordinary expedition was marked by a peculiar and pleasing circumstance. The reader must recollect the capture of the German General Winzengerode before the Kremlin, and the ungenerous manner in which Buonaparte expressed himself to that officer. Winzengerode, with another Russian general, were dispatched, under a suitable guard, from Moscow to Wilna, in order to their being sent from thence to Paris, where the presence of two captives of such distinction might somewhat gild the gloomy news which the Emperor was under the necessity of transmitting from Russia. When Winzengerode was prosecuting his melancholy and involuntary journey, far advanced into Poland, and out of all hope either of relief or escape, he saw by the side of a wood a figure, which retreated so suddenly as hardly gave even his experienced eye time to recognize a Cossack's cap and lance. A ray of hope was awakened, which was changed into certainty, as a band of Cossacks, bursting from the wood, overcame the guard, and delivered the prisoners. Czernicheff proceeded successfully on his expedition, embellished by this agreeable accident, and, moving eastward with the same speed, sagacity, and successful enterprise, joined Witgenstein's army, then

lying between Vitepsk and Tchakniki, with communications from the Moldavian army, and directions how Witgenstein was to cooperate with them in the intended plan of cutting off Napoleon's return to Poland.

In virtue of the orders which he had received, Tchitchagoff advanced upon Schwartzenberg, from whom Napoleon might have first expected the service of a covering army, so soon as his broken and diminished troops should approach Poland. But when Tchitchagoff appeared in force, this Franco-Austrian, or rather Austro-Saxon army, was, after some skirmishing, compelled to retire behind the Bug. The admiral left General Sacken, a brave and active officer, to observe Schwartzenberg and Régnier, and keep them at least in check, whilst he himself retrograded towards the Beresina, where he expected to be able to intercept Buonaparte.

Tchitchagoff succeeded, on the 14th November, in occupying Minsk; a most essential conquest at the moment, for it contained a very large proportion of those stores which had been destined to relieve the Grand Army, or rather its remains, so soon as they should approach Poland. This success was followed by another equally important. Count Lambert, one of Tchitchagoff's generals, marched against Borizoff, situated on the Beresina, at the very point where it was probable that Na-

poleon would be desirous to effect a passage. The valiant Polish General Dombrowski hastened to defend a place, in the loss of which the Emperor's safety must stand particularly compromised. The battle began about daybreak on the 21st November, and, after severe fighting, Lambert obtained possession of Borizoff, after a victory, in which Dombrowski lost eight cannon and 2500 prisoners. The Admiral Tchitchagoff removed his head-quarters thither, as directed by the combined plan for farther operations.

While Tchitchagoff marched eastward to his place of destination on the Beresina, Sacken, whom he had left in Volhynia, sensible of the importance of the service destined for the admiral, made every exertion to draw the whole attention of Schwartzenberg and Régnier upon himself. In this daring and generous scheme he completely succeeded. As the forces of the Austrian and the French generals were separated from each other, Sacken marched against Régnier, and not only surprised, but nearly made him prisoner. Nothing could have saved Régnier from destruction, except the alertness with which Schwartzenberg came to his assistance. The Austrian, with strong reinforcements, arrived nearly in the moment when his presence must have annihilated Sacken, who, not aware of the Austrians being so near, had, on the 15th No-

vember, engaged in a serious action with Régnier near Wolkowitz. The Russian suffered considerable loss, and effected a retreat with difficulty. He concentrated his army, however, and continued his retreat from point to point upon the position of Brzest, from which he had commenced his advance. In this manner, Sacken withdrew the attention of Schwartzenberg and the Austro-Saxon army to the banks of the Bug, at a moment when it ought to have been riveted on the decisive scenes which were about to take place on those of the Beresina.

The French writers complain of the Austrian general on this occasion. They cannot deny that Schwartzenberg was active and victorious; but they complain that his activity exerted itself in a quarter which could not greatly affect the issue of the campaign. Some tacticians account for this, by supposing that his secret instructions, given when the Emperor of Austria could not foresee that the personal safety of his son-in-law would be implicated, prohibited Schwartzenberg to extend his military operations beyond Volhynia and Lithuania.

From these details, it appears that Fortune was bending her blackest and most ominous frowns on the favourite of so many years. Napoleon was quartered, with the wretched relics of his grand army, amid the ruins of the

burnt town of Smolensk, in which he could not remain, although his means of escape appeared almost utterly desperate. The grand army of the Russians waited on his flank to assault his columns the instant they were in motion; and should he escape a pursuing enemy, all the Polish towns in the front, where supplies had been provided for his relief, had been taken, and the two large armies of Tchitchagoff and Witgenstein lay in position on the Beresina to intercept him. Hemmed in betwixt pursuers, and those who, in sportsman's phrase, were stationed to head him back, destitute of cavalry to oppose the nations of Cossacks which infested every motion, and having but little artillery to oppose to that of the Russians, all probability of escape seemed removed to an immeasurable distance.

CHAPTER XIII.

Napoleon divides his Army into four Corps, which leave Smolensk on their retreat towards Poland.—Cautious proceedings of Kutousof.—The Viceroy's division is attacked by Miloradovitch, and effects a junction with Napoleon at Krasnoi, after severe loss.—Kutousof attacks the French at Krasnoi, but only by a distant cannonade.—The division under Davoust is reunited to Napoleon, but in a miserable state.—Napoleon marches to Liady, and Mortier and Davoust are attacked, and suffer heavy loss in killed, wounded, prisoners, and artillery.—Details of the retreat of Ney.—He crosses the Losmina, with great loss of men and baggage, and joins Napoleon at Orcsa, with his division reduced to 1500 men.—The whole Grand Army is now reduced to 12,000 effective men, besides 30,000 stragglers.—Dreadful distress and difficulties of Buonaparte and his Army.—Singular scene betwixt Napoleon, and Duroc and Daru.—Napoleon moves towards Borizoff, and falls in with the corps of Victor and Oudinot.—Kutousof halts at Kopyn, without attacking Buonaparte.—Napoleon crosses the Beresina at Studzianka.—Partouneaux's division cut off by Witgenstein.—Severe fighting on both sides of the river.—Dreadful losses of the French in crossing it.—According to the Russian official account, 36,000 bodies were found in the Beresina after the thaw.

Cooped up, as we have said, in the ruins of Smolensk, and the slender provision of food

and supplies which that place offered to his army almost entirely exhausted, Napoleon had now seriously to consider in what direction he should make an effort to escape. As he had heard of the loss of Vitepsk, by which town he had advanced, and understood that Witgenstein was in possession of the line of the Dwina, he naturally determined to take the road to Wilna, by Krasnoi, Borizoff, and Minsk. The two latter towns were stored with the provisions which he so much wanted; and, ignorant as yet of what had happened on the south of Lithuania, he might expect to find the banks of the Beresina in possession of the Austro-Saxon army under Schwartzenberg.

For this effort he proceeded, as well as circumstances would admit, to reorganize his army. It was reduced to about 40,000 men, with a disproportioned train of baggage and of artillery, although much of the former, and three hundred and fifty cannon, had already been left behind. This force the Emperor divided into four corps, which were to leave Smolensk, placing a day's interval betwixt the march of each. He himself led the van, with 6000 of his Guard, and about as many soldiers, the relics of different corps, amalgamated into battalions as well as circumstances would permit. The Emperor's division left Smolensk on the evening of the 13th, and morning of the 14th November.

The division of the viceroy Eugène, consisting of about the same number as that of Napoleon, but inferior in quality, as comprehending none of the Imperial Guard, could not be collected till late on the 15th November, when the wearied wretches were once more put into march, by promises of a safe arrival in that Lithuania, which so few of them were ever to see again.

On the 16th, Davoust, after some high words with Ney, who would have hurried his departure, set out with another fourth part of the Grand Army, approaching to, or exceeding, 10,000 men in number.

Ney remained till the 17th of November. As he had once more the perilous task of covering the retreat, which duty he had performed so admirably betwixt Wiazma and Smolensk, his division was fortified with about 4000 of the Imperial Guard, to whom, as better fed than the other troops, besides their high character as veterans, more could be trusted, even in the most desperate circumstances. Ere the French left the town, they obeyed the strict commands of the Emperor, in blowing up the towers with which Smolensk was surrounded, that it might not again, as Napoleon expressed himself, form an obstacle to a French army. Such was the language of this extraordinary man, as if affecting to provide for re-entering into Russia, at

a time when it was the only question whether he himself, or any individual of his army, should ever be able to leave the fatal country. —We must next attend to the motions of the Russians.

The general voice of the Russian army had demanded Prince Golitcheff Kutousof, as a chief who would put an end to Barclay de Tolly's system of retreat, and oppose the invaders in a pitched battle. He had done so at Borodino, but it was his last effort of the kind. His character was naturally the reverse of enterprising. Age had increased his disposition to extreme prudence, and the success which attended his procrastinating and cautious measures, while stationed at Taroutino, in the neighbourhood of Moscow, had riveted him to his own system, of risking as little as possible. It was in vain pointed out to him, that the Russian troops were in high condition, and that against an enemy so utterly broken and dispirited as the French *then* were, every thing might be trusted to *those* brave soldiers, who had not shrunk from an equal conflict with the same troops when in their vigour; and who, if then worsted, had left the enemy very little to boast of, having insulted his camp, and occupied the field of battle, even on the very night of his victory. Could Suwarrow have been recalled from the dead, or even the noble Bagra-

tion (the god of the army, as his name signifies in Russian); or had Barclay de Tolly, Bennigsen, or Miloradovitch, been permitted to act when the moment of action approached, it seems probable that Napoleon would have revisited the Kremlin, not as a conqueror but as a prisoner. But Kutousof, trusting to the climate of Russia, was contented to let the French army decay under its influence. He had determined not to encounter the slightest risk, but to glean up the wreck of the elements, rather than anticipate their work by the sword. His general plan was to maintain himself on the flank of Napoleon's army, and from time to time to attack them by his vanguard, but by no means to enter into a general action. He surrounded their corps with Cossacks, who brought with them light field-guns mounted on sledges, which did infinite damage on points where the heavy French guns could not be easily pointed, so as to reply to them. This system may be traced in the preceding pages, and still more in those which are about to follow. It has been applauded by many competent judges, as gaining every thing without putting any thing in hazard; but it is ridiculed by others, and especially by the French, who acknowledge themselves obliged to the tardiness of Kutousof, and the blunders of the Admiral Tchitchagoff, for the escape of the poor rem-

nant of the Grand Army which was preserved, and especially for the personal safety of the Emperor himself. With these explanations we resume our melancholy and momentous story.

Without any purpose of departing from his maxims of caution, Kutousof commenced the attack on the retreating army by a movement which appeared to indicate a more vigorous plan of procedure. He put his army in motion towards Krasnoi, upon a parallel line with that of Buonaparte, moving on the left flank of the French, so as to place Napoleon's line of advance at his mercy, whenever he should think proper to assail it. At the same time, he detached several large bodies to operate on the march of the enemy's column.

Miloradovitch, with a large van-guard, pushed forward upon the high-road leading from Smolensk to Krasnoi. Buonaparte had already reached the latter point, at the head of his division, but Eugène, who brought up the rear of the column, was effectually cut off. They were summoned to lay down their arms, but the Viceroy manfully rejected the proposal. Immediately, each surrounding hill poured forth, like a volcano, a torrent of fire upon them. The French and Italians maintained their ground with unavailing bravery. Numbers were killed, others made prisoners, and the division almost entirely destroyed.

Still the Viceroy made his defence good, till night, the friend of the overmatched, approached to protect him; when, at the head of his division, diminished to one half, he quitted the high-road, leaving his fires burning to mislead the enemy, and, gaining the open fields, accomplished, with great loss and ineffable fatigue, his junction with Napoleon at Krasnoi, which he reached by a circuitous route. The challenge of a sentinel during this delicate manœuvre might have been utter destruction—and in fact they did encounter such a challenge. They were saved from the consequences by a ready-witted Pole, who, answering the sentinel in Russian, imposed silence on him, pretending that they were the corps of Owaroff, employed upon a secret expedition.

At length, upon the next morning (17th November), Eugène reached the head-quarters of his father-in-law, who had been very anxious on his account. When the diminished division of Eugène was united to that of the Emperor, they did not exceed 15,000 men in total amount. Yet on being joined by Eugène, the active genius of Napoleon, in these most disadvantageous circumstances, displayed its ascendancy. He had caused General Roguet, with a detachment of the Young Guard, in the night between the 15th and 16th, to beat up the

quarters of a Russian detachment, which approached his own too closely; and having thus taught the hunters to respect the lair of the lion, he embraced the audacious resolution of remaining at Krasnoi in defiance of the Russian army, till the detachments of Davoust and Ney should again join him. Whatever had been his reasons for separating from these divisions, he now saw the necessity of once more uniting his forces.

Even the cold and cautious spirit of Kutousof could not miss the opportunity occasioned by this halt of 15,000 men, in the face of perhaps three times their number. But neither the persuasions of his own officers, nor the reproaches of Sir Robert Wilson, the English commissioner, could prevail on the old general to attack with the vivacity which the occasion demanded. He would only consent to wage a distant engagement with artillery. At day-break on the 17th, Eugène, whose forces the preceding battle had altogether disabled, was directed to take the advance towards Liady, the next miserable stage of the French army, while Buonaparte drew his sword, and saying he had already played the Emperor, and must now once more be the general, led in person his 6000 guards, attended by Mortier at the head of 5000 soldiers more, to meet as great odds as it should

please Kutousof to dispatch against him.[1] In the sort of battle which followed, the Russians acted with great caution. The name of Napoleon almost alone protected his army. The French suffered, indeed, from the fire of 100 pieces of artillery, and from charges of cavalry, which they had no means of answering or repelling; but, though gaps were made in their line, and some of their squares were forced by the cavalry, yet neither success nor repulse could induce Kutousof to hazard a serious attack upon Napoleon, for the purpose of altogether destroying the invader and his army. Even Boutourlin, a friendly critic, where the reputation of the old Russian general is concerned, regrets he had not taken the bold course of placing his army across the direct line of Buonaparte's retreat, when the French, overcome at once by physical suffer-

[1] Colonel Boutourlin praises the address of Kutousof, who, he says, managed with such skill as always to present a superior force to that which the French had upon the field of battle, although his army was on the whole inferior to that of Napoleon Without admitting the exactness of the last statement, which there is considerable cause to dispute, little merit can be assumed for the Russian general's dexterity in obtaining a numerical superiority at Wiazma, Krasnoi, and elsewhere, when it is considered that Napoleon himself had divided his army into four columns, and placed one day's march betwixt each. The Russians had, therefore, only one column of ten or twelve thousand men to deal with at once.

ing and moral depression, must, even supposing them equal in numbers, have been extremely inferior to their opponents. Upon the whole, Kutousof seems to have acted towards Napoleon and the Grand Army, as the Greenland fishers do to the whale, whom they are careful not to approach in his dying agonies, when pain, fury, and a sense of revenge, render the last struggles of the leviathan peculiarly dangerous.

The battle, or cannonade of Krasnoi, was concluded by the appearance of Davoust and his column, surrounded and followed by a large body of Cossacks, from whom he endeavoured to extricate himself by a precipitate march. When they came in sight of Krasnoi, most of the soldiers, who had been horribly harassed since they left Smolensk, broke their ranks, and hurried across the fields to escape the Russians, and gain the cover of the town, in the streets of which their officers rallied them with difficulty. In this miserable condition was the third corps of the army, according to its latest division, when it was reunited to the main body. Upon inquiring after Ney and the rear-guard, Napoleon had the mortification to learn that Ney was probably still at Smolensk, or, if upon the road, that he must be surrounded with difficulties out of which it was impossible he could extricate himself.

In the mean time, Napoleon learned that the

Russians were acting with more vigour, and that Prince Galitzin was about to occupy Krasnoi; and further, that if he did not advance with all dispatch on Liady, he might probably find it in possession of the enemy. Gladly as Napoleon would have kept the field, in order to protect the approach of Ney, he now saw that such perseverance must necessarily expose himself and the remnant of his army to the greatest peril, without, in all human probability, being of use to his mareschal. Under this conviction, he put himself at the head of the Old Guard, to march on as fast as possible, and secure Liady, and with it the passage of the Dnieper, from which he might otherwise have been excluded. Davoust and Mortier were left to defend Krasnoi, if practicable, till night-fall, and then to follow under cover of the darkness. The retreat of Napoleon seemed to remove the charm, which had chilled the Russians and warmed the French. A very fierce assault was made on the second and third divisions, and Mortier and Davoust, having both suffered greatly, made their escape to Liady with much difficulty. The French left on this fatal field forty-five pieces of cannon, upwards of six thousand prisoners, with a great number of slain, and as many wounded, who were necessarily left to the mercy of the Russians. To complete their losses, Ney's division of the army was, by the direction of the

other columns upon Liady, left with the whole Russian army betwixt himself and Napoleon. The retreat of that celebrated soldier must next be narrated.

On the 17th of November, Ney, last of the invading army, left Smolensk at the head of seven or eight thousand fighting men, leaving behind 5,000 sick and wounded, and dragging along with them the remaining stragglers whom the cannon of Platoff, who entered the town immediately on Ney's departure, had compelled to resume their march. They advanced without much interruption till they reached the field of battle of Krasnoi, where they saw all the relics of a bloody action, and heaps of dead, from whose dress and appearance they could recognize the different corps in which they had served in Napoleon's army, though there was no one to tell the fate of the survivors. They had not proceeded much farther beyond this fatal spot, when they approached the banks of the Losmina, where all had been prepared at leisure for their reception. Miloradovitch lay here at the head of a great force; and a thick mist, which covered the ground, occasioned Ney's column to advance under the Russian batteries before being aware of the danger.

A single Russian officer appeared, and invited Ney to capitulate. « A mareschal of France never surrenders, » answered that in-

trepid general. The officer retired, and the Russian batteries opened a fire of grape-shot, at the distance of only two hundred and fifty yards, while at the concussion the mist arose, and showed the devoted column of French, with a ravine in front manned by their enemies, subjected on every side to a fire of artillery, while the hills were black with the Russian troops placed to support their guns. Far from losing heart in so perilous a situation, the French Guards, with rare intrepidity, forced their way through the ravine of the Losmina, and rushed with the utmost fury on the Russian batteries. They were, however, charged in their turn with the bayonet, and such as had crossed the stream suffered dreadfully. In spite of this failure, Ney persevered in the attempt to cut his passage by main force through this superior body of Russians, who lay opposed to him in front. Again the French advanced upon the cannon, losing whole ranks, which were supplied by their comrades as fast as they fell. The assault was once more unsuccessful, and Ney, seeing that the general fate of his column was no longer doubtful, endeavoured at least to save a part from the wreck. Having selected about four thousand of the best men, he separated himself from the rest, and set forth under shelter of the night, moving to the rear, as if about to return to Smolensk. This, indeed, was the only road

open to him, but he did not pursue it long; for as soon as he reached a rivulet, which had the appearance of being one of the feeders of the Dnieper, he adopted it for his guide to the banks of that river, which he reached in safety near the village of Syrokovenia. Here he found a single place in the river frozen over, though the ice was so thin that it bent beneath the steps of the soldiers.

Three hours were permitted, to allow stragglers from the column during the night-march to rally at this place, should their good fortune enable them to find it. These three hours Ney spent in profound sleep, lying on the banks of the river, and wrapped up in his cloak. When the stipulated time had elapsed, the passage to the other side began and continued, although the motion of the ice, and the awful sound of its splitting into large cracks, prevented more than one from crossing at once. The waggons, some loaded with sick and wounded, last attempted to pass; but the ice broke with them, and the heavy plunge and stifled moaning, apprised their companions of their fate. The Cossacks, as usual, speedily appeared in the rear, gleaned up some hundreds of prisoners, and took possession of the artillery and baggage.

Ney had thus put the Dnieper betwixt him and the regulars of the Russian army, by a retreat which has few parallels in military

history. But he had not escaped the Cossacks, who were spread abroad over the face of the country, and soon assembled around the remains of his column, with their light artillery and long lances. By these enemies they were several times placed in the utmost jeopardy; nevertheless, at the head of a reduced band of fifteen hundred men, the mareschal fought his way to Orcsa, to which town Napoleon had removed from Liady, having crossed the Dnieper. Ney arrived on the 20th November, and found Eugène, Mortier, and Davoust. The Emperor was two leagues in advance when they met. Napoleon hailed Ney with the undisputed title, the bravest of the brave, and declared he would have given all his treasures to be assured of his existence. His comrades hastened to welcome and to relieve him, and being now in Poland, provisions and accommodation had become more plenty among them.

All Napoleon's Grand Army was now united. But the whole, which had at Smolensk amounted to forty thousand, consisted now of scarcely twelve thousand men who retained the name and discipline of soldiers, so much had want and the sword thinned the ranks of these invincible legions. There were besides, perhaps, thirty thousand stragglers of every description, but these added little or nothing to the strength of the army; and only served to

encumber its numbers, as they were under no discipline, but plundered the country without mercy.

At this dreadful crisis, too, Napoleon had the mortification to learn the fall of Minsk, and the retreat of Schwartzenberg to cover Warsaw, which, of course, left him no hopes of receiving succour from the Austrians. He heard also that Victor and Oudinot had quarrelled in what manner Witgenstein should be attacked, and had on that account left him unattacked on any point. That general was therefore at freedom to threaten the left of the Grand Army, should it remain long on the Dnieper; while Kutousof might resume, at his pleasure, his old station on Napoleon's left, and Tchitchagoff might occupy the Beresina in his front. In the bitterness of his heart the Emperor exclaimed, « Thus it befalls, when we commit faults upon faults.»

Minsk being out of the question, Napoleon's next point of direction was Borizoff. Here there was, over the Beresina, a bridge of three hundred fathoms in length, the possession of which appeared essential to his final escape from Russia. But while Napoleon was considering what should be his next movement, after crossing the Beresina at Borizoff, he was once more surprised with the additional evil tidings, that this town also, with the bridge so necessary to him, was lost; that Borizoff was

taken, as formerly mentioned, and Dombrowski defeated under its walls.

« Is it then written, » he said, looking upwards, and striking the earth with his cane, « Is it written that we shall commit nothing but errors? »

About the same gloomy period, Ségur relates the following anecdote :—Napoleon had stretched himself on a couch, and apparently slumbered, while his faithful servants, Duroc and Daru, sitting in his apartment, talked over their critical situation. In their whispered conversation, the words, « prisoner of state, » reached the sleepless ear of Napoleon.

« How! » said he, raising himself, « do you think they would dare? »

In answer, Daru mentioned the phrase, well known to the Emperor, of state policy, as a thing independent of public law or of morality.

« But France, » said the Emperor, to whom state policy sounded at present less pleasantly than when it was appealed to for deciding some great movement of his own,—« what will France say? »

« Who can answer that question, Sire? » continued Duroc; but added, « it was his warmest wish that the Emperor, at least, could reach France, were it through the air, if earth were stopped against his passage. »

« Then I am in your way, I suppose?» said the Emperor.

The reply was affirmative.

« And you,» continued the Emperor, with an affectation of treating the matter lightly, « have no wish to become a prisoner of state?»

« To be a prisoner of war is sufficient for me,» said Daru.

Napoleon was silent for a time; then asked if the reports of his ministers were burnt.

« Not yet,» was the reply.

« Then let them be destroyed,» he continued, « for it must be confessed we are in a most lamentable condition.»

This was the strongest sign he had yet given, of Napoleon's deep feeling of the situation to which he had reduced himself. In studying the map, to discover the fittest place to pass the Beresina, he approached his finger to the country of the Cossacks, and was heard to murmur, « Ah, Charles XII.; Pultawa.» But these were only the momentary ejaculations dictated by a sense of his condition; all his resolutions were calmly and firmly taken, with a sense of what was due to himself and to his followers.

It was finally determined, that, in despite of Tchitchagoff and his army, which occupied the left bank, the passage of the Beresina should be attempted, at a place above Borizoff

called Studzianka, where the stream was only fifty-five fathoms across, and six feet deep. There were heights, it is true, on the opposite bank, surrounding a piece of meadow ground, and these the adventurers must look to find strongly occupied; so that those who adventured on the passage must expect to land in that marshy meadow, under a heavy fire from that position. Lastly, this perilous attempt must, in all probability, be made in the very teeth of the Moldavian army. With Napoleon's ten or twelve thousand fighting men, and twice or three times the number of disorderly stragglers, the attempt to force such a passage would have been utter insanity. But the star of Napoleon had not yet set.

The first dawn of reviving fortune was marked by the success of Victor and Oudinot. They were advancing with the hope of saving Borizoff, when they received intelligence that Dombrowski was routed by Witgenstein, and that the fragments of the Polish corps were close at hand, followed by the victorious Russians. Oudinot instantly gathered the scattered Poles under his protection, and moving on to meet the Russian advanced guard, they drove them back with considerable loss. Witgenstein, in consequence of this check, found himself obliged to abandon Borizoff, and once more to place the Beresina betwixt himself and the French. But in repassing that river,

he took care to destroy the bridge at Borizoff, so that the town, though secured by the French, was no longer useful to them as a place of passage, and the Emperor, when he learned the news, was still compelled to abide by the plan of crossing, as he best could, at Studzianka. The task was rendered more easy, by the prospect of his scattered and broken army being reinforced by the troops of Victor and Oudinot, who were on the same side of the fatal river with himself, and might form an immediate junction with him.

Meantime, as a preparation for the march, the Emperor limited all the officers, even of the highest rank, to one carriage; and ordered one half of the waggons to be destroyed, that all the horses and draught-oxen might be applied to getting forward the ammunition and artillery. There is reason to think these commands were very imperfectly obeyed. Another order, marking strongly the exigencies of the time, respected such officers as still retained their horses. The cavalry, under Latour Maubourg, had, since leaving Smolensk, been reduced from eighteen hundred to one hundred and fifty. To supply this deficiency, about five hundred officers, all who remained mounted, were formed into a body called the Sacred Squadron, to attend upon the Emperor's person. Grouchy and Sébastiani had the command of this body, in which officers form-

ed the privates, and generals of division served as captains. But it was not long ere fatigue and want of forage, no respecters of rank or condition, dismounted the greater part of the Sacred Squadron.

The army thus in some small degree reorganized, and refreshed by the better quarters and nourishment which they had received since the battle of Krasnoi, now plunged into the immense pine-forests which conceal the course of the Beresina, to disguise their adventurous march the more completely from the enemy. They were moving towards Borizoff, when loud shouts from the forest at first spread confusion among their ranks, under the idea of an unexpected attack; but this fear was soon changed into joy, when they found themselves on the point of uniting with the army of Victor and Oudinot, amounting to fifty thousand men, complete and provided with every thing. Yet whatever the joy on the part of the Grand Army, it was at least equalled by the astonishment of their comrades, when they recognized the remains of the innumerable host which had left them in such splendid equipment, and now returned in the guise, and with the gait and manner, of spectres raised from a church-yard. They filed past their happier comrades with squalid countenances, their uniform replaced by women's pelisses, or what various rags each could pick up; their feet bare and bleeding, or

protected by bundles of filthy rags instead of shoes. All discipline seemed gone; the officer gave no command, the soldier obeyed none. A sense of common danger led them to keep together and to struggle forward, and mutual fatigue made them take repose by the same fires, but what else they had learned of discipline was practised rather by instinct than by duty, and in many cases was altogether forgotten.

The army of the two mareschals, however, though scarce recovered from their astonishment, joined the ranks of the Grand Army, and, as if disorder had been infectious, very soon showed a disposition to get rid of that military discipline, which their new associates had flung aside.—Leaving Napoleon on his advance to the river, it is now necessary to notice the motions of the Russians.

The glory and the trophies of the march of the Grand Army had been enough entirely to satisfy Kutousof. They were indeed sufficient to gorge such a limited ambition as that general might be supposed to possess at his advanced age, when men are usually more bent on saving than on winning. From the 15th to the 19th November, the Russians had obtained possession of 228 guns, had made 26,000 prisoners, of whom three hundred were officers, besides 10,000 men slain in battle, or destroyed by fatigue. Satisfied with such advantages,

the cautious veteran proceeded by short journeys to Kopyn, on the Dnieper, without crossing that river, or attempting to second the defence of the Beresina by an attack on the rear of the enemy.

It is true, that the Russian army had sustained great losses; not less, it was said, than 30,000 sick and wounded, were for the present unable to serve, although the greater part of them afterwards recovered. It is no less true, that the Russian soldiers suffered greatly from want of hospitals, being unprovided for a struggle on such an extensive scale as Napoleon's invasion gave rise to. Nor can it be denied that Kutousof's minute attention to the proper providing of his army with all necessaries was highly laudable. Yet we must still be of opinion, than an object so important as the capture of Buonaparte and the destruction of his army, would have vindicated, even if the soldier himself had been appealed to, two or three forced marches, with the hardships attending them. Such, however, was not Kutousof's opinion; he halted at Kopyn, and contented himself with dispatching his Cossacks and light troops to annoy Napoleon's rear.

The danger not being pressing on the part of the Grand Army of Russia, Napoleon had only to apprehend the opposition of Tchitchagoff, whose army, about 35,900 men in all,

was posted along the Beresina to oppose the passage of Buonaparte wherever it should be attempted. Unfortunately, the admiral was one of an ordinary description of people, who, having once determined in their own mind, that an adversary entertains a particular design, proceed to act upon that belief as an absolute certainty, and can rarely be brought to reason on the possibility of his having any other purpose. Thus, taking it for granted that Napoleon's attempt to cross the Beresina would take place *below* Borizoff, Tchitchagoff could not be persuaded that the passage might be as well essayed *above* that town. Napoleon, by various inquiries and reports transmitted through the Jews, who, for money, served as spies on both sides, contrived to strengthen Tchitchagoff in the belief that he was only designing a feint upon Studzianka, in order to withdraw the attention of the Russians from the Lower Beresina. Never was a stratagem more successful.

On the very day when Napoleon prepared for the passage at Studzianka, Tchitchagoff, instead of noticing what was going forward above Borizoff, not only marched down the river with all the forces under his own immediate command, but issued orders to the division of Tschaplitz, which amounted to six thousand men, and at present watched the very spot where Napoleon meant to erect his

bridges, to leave that position, and follow him down the river. These were the very orders which Buonaparte would have dictated to the Russian leader, if he had had his choice.

When the French arrived at Studzianka, their first business was to prepare two bridges, a work which was attended with much danger and difficulty. They laboured by night, expecting in the morning to be saluted with a cannonade from the Russian detachment under Tschaplitz, which occupied the heights already mentioned, on the opposite bank. The French generals, and particularly Murat, considered the peril as so imminent, that they wished Buonaparte to commit himself to the faith of some Poles who knew the country, and leave them to their fate; but Napoleon rejected the proposal as unworthy of him. All night the French laboured at the bridges, which were yet but little advanced, and might have been easily demolished by the artillery of the Russians. But what was the joy and surprise of the French to see, with the earliest beams of the morning, that artillery, and those Russians, in full march retreating from their position! Availing himself of their disappearance, Buonaparte threw across a body of men, who swam their horses over the river, with each a voltigeur behind him. Thus a footing was gained on the other bank of this perilous stream. Great part of Victor's army had moved

up the river towards Studzianka, while the last division lay still at Borizoff, of which that mareschal had possession. This constituted a rear-guard to protect the army of Napoleon during the critical moment of its passage, from the interruption which might be expected from the corps of Witgenstein.

During the 26th and 27th, Napoleon pushed troops across the river, those of Oudinot forming the advance; and was soon so secure, that Tschaplitz, discovering his error, and moving back to regain his important position at Studzianka, found the French too strongly posted on the left bank of the Beresina, for the regaining the opportunity which he had lost. He halted, therefore, at Stakhowa, and waited for reinforcements and orders. Meanwhile the passage of the Beresina continued, slowly indeed, for the number of stragglers and the quantity of baggage was immense; yet by noon Napoleon and his Guards had crossed the river. Victor, whose division constituted the rear-guard of the Grand Army, had relieved the Imperial Guards in their post on the left bank; and Partouneaux, who formed the rear of the whole army, was moving from Borizoff, where he had been stationed with the purpose of fixing the enemy's attention upon that spot. No sooner had he left Borizoff than it was again in the hands of the Russians, being instantly occupied by Platoff.

But the indefatigable Witgenstein was in motion on the right bank, pressing forward as Victor closed up towards Napoleon; and, throwing himself betwixt Studzianka and Borizoff, on a plain called Staroi-Borizoff, he cut off Partouneaux's division from the rest of the French army. That general made a gallant resistance, and attempted to force his way at the sword's point through the troops opposed to him. At length the Hettman Platoff, and the Russian partisan Seslavin, coming up, the French general found himself entirely overpowered, and, after a brave resistance, laid down his arms. Three generals, with artillery, and, according to the Russian accounts, about 7000 men, fell into the hands of the Russians, —a prize the more valuable, as the prisoners belonged chiefly to the unbroken and unexhausted division of Victor, and comprehended eight hundred fine cavalry in good order.

To improve this advantage, the Russians threw a bridge of pontoons across the Beresina at Borizoff, and Tchitchagoff and Witgenstein having communicated, resolved upon a joint attack upon both banks of the river at once. With this purpose, upon the 28th of November, Admiral Tchitchagoff moved to Stakhowa, upon the left bank, to reinforce Tschaplitz, and assault that part of the French army which had crossed the Beresina; and Witgenstein with

Platoff marched towards Studzianka, to destroy the Emperor's rear-guard, which no exertion on the part of Napoleon or his generals had yet been able to get across the river. Thus, the extraordinary good fortune of finding a place of passage, and of being enabled by an uncommon chance to complete his bridges without opposition, was so far from placing Napoleon in safety, that his dangers seemed only to multiply around him. But yet upon his side of the river, now the left bank, his own presence of mind, and the bravery of his soldiers, gave him a decided superiority, and the tardiness, to say the least, of Tchitchagoff's motions, insured his safety.

Tschaplitz, who seems to have been a brave and active officer, commenced the battle by advancing from Stakhowa. But he was worsted by the French, who were superior in numbers, and he received no succours from the admiral, though repeatedly demanded.[1] In this manner were the French enabled to force their way towards a village called Brilowau, through deep morasses, and over long bridges or railways, formed of the trunks of pine-trees, where a bold attack might have rendered their advance impossible. The least exertion on

[1] The conduct of the admiral was so unaccountable on this occasion, that some attempted to explain it on his naval habits, and to suppose that he was prevented from sending the reinforcements by the wind being contrary.

the part of Tchitchagoff might have caused these bridges to be burnt; and as combustibles were laid ready for the purpose, it required but, according to Ségur's expression, a spark from the pipe of a Cossack, to have set them on fire. The destruction of this railway, inclosing the French between the morass and the river, must have rendered the passage of the Beresina entirely useless. But it was not so decreed; and the French, under Oudinot, were enabled to preserve the means of a movement so essential to their safety. Meanwhile the scene on the right bank had become the wildest and most horrible which war can exhibit.

On the heights of Studzianka, Victor, who commanded the French rear-guard, amounting perhaps to 8,000 or 10,000 men, was prepared to cover the retreat over the bridges. The right of this corps d'armée rested on the river; a ravine full of bushes covered their front, but the left wing had no point of support. It remained, according to the military phrase, *in the air,* and was covered by two regiments of cavalry. Behind this defensive line were many thousands of stragglers, mingled with the usual followers of a camp, and with all those individuals who, accompanying, for various reasons, the French from Moscow, had survived the horrors of the march. Women, children, domestics, the aged and the infants,

were seen among the wretched mass, and wandered by the side of this fatal river, like the fabled spectres which throng the banks of the infernal Styx, and seek in vain for passage. The want of order, which it was impossible to preserve, the breaking of the bridges, and the time spent in the repair—the fears of the unhappy wretches to trust themselves to the dangerous and crowded passages, had all operated to detain them on the right bank. The baggage, which, in spite of the quantity already lost, of the difficulty of transportation, and of Napoleon's precise orders, amounted still to a very great number of carts, waggons, and the like, and which was now augmented by all that belonged to the troops of Oudinot and Victor, was seen, some filing towards the bridges, and the greater part standing in confusion upon the shore. The artillery itself, such as remained, was in no better state.

Such was the condition of matters at the bridge, when Witgenstein, after his victory over Partouneaux, marching up the right bank of the Beresina, engaged in a fierce combat with the rear-guard under Victor; and the balls of the Russians began to fall among the mingled and disordered mass which we have endeavoured to describe. It was then that the whole body of stragglers and fugitives rushed like distracted beings towards the bridges, every feeling of prudence or huma-

nity swallowed up by the animal instinct of self-preservation. The horrible scene of disorder was augmented by the desperate violence of those, who, determined to make their own way at all risks, threw down and trampled upon whatever came in their road. The weak and helpless either shrunk back from the fray, and sat down to wait their fate at a distance, or, mixing in it, were thrust over the bridges, crushed under carriages, cut down perhaps with sabres, or trampled to death under the feet of their countrymen. All this while the action continued with fury, and, as if the heavens meant to match their wrath with that of man, a hurricane arose, and added terrors to a scene which was already of a character so dreadful.

About mid-day the French, still bravely resisting, began to lose ground. The Russians, coming gradually up in strength, succeeded in forcing the ravine, and compelling them to assume a position nearer the bridges. About the same time, the larger bridge, that constructed for artillery and heavy carriages, broke down, and multitudes were forced into the water. The scream of mortal agony, which arose from the despairing multitude, became at this crisis for a moment so universal, that it rose shrilly audible over the noise of the elements and the thunders of war, above the wild whistling of the tempest, and

the sustained and redoubled hourras of the Cossacks. The witness from whom we have this information declares that the sound was in his ears for many weeks. This dreadful scene continued till dark, many being forced into the icy river, some throwing themselves in, betwixt absolute despair, and the faint hope of gaining the opposite bank by swimming, some getting across only to die of cold and exhaustion. As the obscurity came on, Victor, with the remainder of his troops, which was much reduced, quitted the station he had defended so bravely, and led them in their turn across. All night, the miscellaneous multitude continued to throng across the bridge, under the fire of the Russian artillery, to whom, even in the darkness, the noise which accompanied their march made them a distinct mark. At day-break, the French engineer, General Eblé, finally set fire to the bridge. All that remained on the other side, including many prisoners, and a great quantity of guns and baggage, became the prisoners and the prey of the Russians. The amount of the French loss was never exactly known; but the Russian report, concerning the bodies of the invaders which were collected and burnt as soon as the thaw permitted, states that upwards of 36,000 were found in the Beresina.

CHAPTER XIV.

Napoleon determines to return to Paris.—He leaves Smorgoni on 5th December—reaches Warsaw on the 10th.—Curious Interview with the Abbé de Pradt.—Arrives at Dresden on the 14th—and at Paris on the 18th, at midnight.—Dreadful state of the Grand Army, when left by Napoleon—Arrive at Wilna, whence they are driven by Cossacks, directing their flight upon Kowno.—Dissensions among the French Generals.—Cautious Policy of the Austrians under Schwartzenberg.—Precarious state of Macdonald.—He retreats upon Tilsit.—D'Yorck separates his Troops from the French.—Macdonald effects his retreat to Konigsberg.—Close of the Russian Expedition, with a loss on the part of the French of 450,000 Men in Killed and Prisoners.—Discussion of the Causes which led to this ruinous Catastrophe.

When the army of Buonaparte was assembled on the other side of the Beresina, they exhibited symptoms of total disorganization. The village of Brilowau, where they halted on the night of their passage, was entirely pulled down, that the materials might supply camp-fires; and a considerable part of Buonaparte's head-quarters was included in the same fate, his own apartment being with difficulty saved

from the soldiery. They could scarcely be blamed for this want of discipline, for the night was deadly cold; and of the wet and shivering wretches who had been immersed in the icy river, many laid their heads down never to raise them more.

On the 29th November, the Emperor left the fatal banks of the Beresina, at the head of an army more disorganized than ever; for few of Oudinot's corps, and scarcely any belonging to Victor's, who were yet remaining, were able to resist the general contagion of disorder. They pushed on without any regular disposition, having no more van-guard, centre, or rear, than can be ascribed to a flock of sheep. To outstrip the Russians was their only desire, and yet numbers were daily surprised by the partisans and Cossacks. Most fortunately for Napoleon, the precaution of the Duke of Bassano had dispatched to the banks of the Beresina a division of French, commanded by General Maison, who were sufficient to form a rear-guard, and to protect this disorderly and defenceless mass of fugitives. Thus they reached Malodeczno on the 3d December.

Here Buonaparte opened to his chief confidants his resolution to leave the army, and push forward to Paris. The late conspiracy of Malet had convinced him of the necessity of

his presence there.[1] His remaining with an army, which scarce had existence in a military sense, could be of no use. He was near Prussia, where, from reluctant allies, the inhabitants were likely to be changed into bitter enemies. He was conscious of what he had meditated against the King of Prussia, had he returned victorious, and judged from his own purposes the part which Frederick was likely to adopt, in consequence of this great reverse in his fortunes.

This resolution being adopted, Napoleon announced that preparations for his departure should be made at Smorgoni, intending to remain at Malodeczno till he should be joined by General Maison with the rear-guard, which was left a day's march behind the main body. He now waited until it should close up with him. They came at last, but with Tschaplitz and the Russians at their heels. Intense cold (the thermometer being twenty degrees below zero,) prevented any thing more than skirmishes between them.

On the 5th December, Buonaparte was at Smorgoni, where he again received a welcome reinforcement, being joined by Loison, advancing at the head of the garrison of Wilna, to protect his retreat to that place, and whose

[1] The reader will find the details of this singular attempt in pp. 439-444.

opportune assistance gave a new rear-guard, to supply that commanded by Maison, which the war and weather had already rendered as incapable of effectual service, as those whom they had protected from the banks of the Beresina to Smorgoni. Loison had orders to take in his turn this destructive duty, for which purpose he was to remain a day's march, as usual, behind the mass of what had been the army.

The order of the march to Wilna thus arranged, Napoleon determined on his own departure. Three sledges were provided; one of which was prepared to carry him and Caulaincourt, whose title the Emperor proposed to assume while travelling incognito, although their figures were strikingly dissimilar, the Duke of Vicenza being a tall, raw-boned, stiff-looking man. In a general audience, at which were present the King of Naples, the Viceroy, Berthier, and the mareschals, Napoleon announced to them that he had left Murat to command the army, as generalissimo. He talked to them in terms of hope and confidence. He promised to check the Austrians and Prussians in their disposition for war, by presenting himself at the head of the French nation, and twelve hundred thousand men;—he said he had ordered Ney to Wilna, to reorganize the army, and to strike such a blow as should discourage the advance of the Russians;

—lastly, he assured them of winter quarters beyond the Niemen. He then took an affectionate and individual farewell of each of his generals, and, stepping into his traîneau, a lively emblem of the fishing-boat of Xerxes, he departed from Smorgoni at the late hour of ten at night.

With what feelings this extraordinary man left the remains of his army, we have no means even of guessing. His outward bearing, during his extreme distresses, had been in general that of the utmost firmness; so that such expressions of grief or irritation, as at times broke from him, were picked up and registered by those who heard them, as curious instances of departure from his usual state of composure. To preserve his tranquillity, he permitted no details to be given him of the want and misery with which he was surrounded. Thus, when Colonel d'Albignac brought news of Ney's distresses, after the battle of Wiazma, he stopped his mouth by saying sharply, « He desired to know no particulars.» It was of a piece with this resolution, that he always gave out orders as if the whole Imperial army had existed in its various divisions, after two-thirds had been destroyed, and the remainder reduced to an undisciplined mob. « Would you deprive me of my tranquillity?» he said angrily to an officer, who thought it necessary to dwell on the actual circumstances

of the army, when some orders, expressed in this manner, had been issued. And when the persevering functionary persisted to explain, —thinking, perhaps, in his simplicity, that Napoleon did not know that which in fact he only was reluctant to dwell upon,—he reiterated angrily, « I ask you, sir, why you would deprive me of my tranquillity?»

It is evident, that Napoleon must have known the condition of his army as well as any one around him; but, to admit that he was acquainted with that which he could not remedy, would have been acknowledging a want of power inconsistent with the character of one, who would willingly be thought rather the controller than the subject of Fate. Napoleon was none of those princes mentioned by Horace, who, in poverty and exile, lay aside their titles of majesty, and language of authority. The head-quarters of Smorgoni, and the residences of Porto Ferrajo and Saint Helena, can alike bear witness to the tenacity with which he clung not only to power, but to the forms and circumstance attendant upon sovereignty, at periods when the essence of that sovereignty was either endangered or lost. A deeper glance into his real feelings may be obtained from the report of the Abbé de Pradt, which is well worth transcribing.

After narrowly escaping being taken by the Russian partisan Seslavin. at a hamlet called

Youpranoui, Napoleon reached Warsaw upon the 10th December. Here the Abbé de Pradt, then minister of France to the Diet of Poland, was in the act of endeavouring to reconcile the various rumours which poured in from every quarter, when a figure like a spectre, wrapped in furs, which were stiffened by hoar-frost, stalked into his apartments, supported by a domestic, and was with difficulty recognized by the ambassador as the Duke of Vicenza.

« You here, Caulaincourt?» said the astonished prelate.—«And where is the Emperor?»

« At the hôtel d'Angleterre, waiting for you.»

« Why not stop at the palace?»

« He travels incognito.»

« Do you need any thing?»

« Some Burgundy or Malaga.»

« All is at your service—but whither are you travelling?»

« To Paris.»

« To Paris!—but where is the army?»

« It exists no longer,» said Caulaincourt, looking upwards.

« And the victory of the Beresina—and the six thousand prisoners?» [1]

« We got across, that is all—the prisoners

[1] This alludes to exaggerated reports circulated by Maret, Duke of Bassano, then residing at Wilna, of a pretended victory obtained by Napoleon, at the passage at Studzianka.

were a few hundred men, who have escaped. We have had other business than to guard them.»

His curiosity thus far satisfied, the Abbé de Pradt hastened to the hotel. In the yard stood three sledges in a dilapidated condition. One for the Emperor and Caulaincourt, the second for two officers of rank, the third for the Mameluke Rustan and another domestic. He was introduced with some mystery into a bad inn's bad room, where a servant wench was blowing a fire made of green wood. Here was the Emperor, whom the Abbé de Pradt had last seen when he played King of Kings among the assembled sovereigns of Dresden. He was dressed in a green pelisse, covered with lace and lined with furs, and, by walking briskly about the apartment, was endeavouring to obtain the warmth which the chimney refused. He saluted «Monsieur l'Ambassadeur,» as he termed him, with gaiety. The abbé felt a movement of sensibility, to which he was disposed to give way, but, as he says, «The poor man did not understand me.» He limited his expressions of devotion, therefore, to helping Napoleon off with his cloak. To us, it seems that Napoleon repelled the effusions of the Archbishop of Malines' interest, because he did not chuse to be the object either of his interest or his pity. He heard from his minister, that the minds of the inha-

bitants of the Grand Duchy had been much changed since they had been led to despair of the regeneration of their country; and that they were already, since they could not be free Polanders, studying how to reconcile themselves with their former governors of Prussia. The entrance of two Polish ministers checked the ambassador's communications. The conversation was maintained from that moment by Napoleon alone; or rather he indulged in a monologue, turning upon the sense he entertained that the failure of his Russian expedition would diminish his reputation, while he struggled against the painful conviction, by numbering up the plans by which he might repair his losses, and alleging the natural obstacles to which he had been obliged to succumb.

« We must levy ten thousand Poles, » he said, « and check the advance of these Russians. A lance and a horse are all that is necessary.— There is but a single step betwixt the sublime and the ridiculous. »

The functionaries congratulated him on his escape from so many dangers.

« Dangers! » he replied; « none in the world. I live in agitation. The more I bustle the better I am. It is for kings of Cocagne to fatten in their palaces—horseback and the fields are for me.—From the sublime to the

ridiculous there is but a single step—Why do I find you so much alarmed here?»

« We are at a loss to gather the truth of the news about the army. »

« Bah! » replied the Emperor; « the army is in a superb condition. I have a hundred and twenty thousand men—I have beat the Russians in every action—they are no longer the soldiers of Friedland and Eylau. The army will recruit at Wilna—I am going to bring up three hundred thousand men—Success will render the Russians fool-hardy—I will give them battle twice or thrice upon the Oder, and in a month I will be again on the Niemen—I have more weight when on my throne, than at the head of my army.—Certainly I quit my soldiers with regret; but I must watch Austria and Prussia, and I have more weight seated on my throne than at the head of my army. All that has happened goes for nothing—a mere misfortune, in which the enemy can claim no merit—I beat them everywhere—they wished to cut me off at the Beresina—I made a fool of that ass of an admiral—(He could never pronounce the name Tchitchagoff)—I had good troops and cannon—the position was superb—five hundred toises of marsh—a river——» This he repeated twice, then run over the distinction in the 29th bulletin between men of strong and feeble minds, and proceeded.—« I have seen

worse affairs than this—At Marengo I was beaten till six o'clock in the evening—next day I was master of Italy—At Essling, that Archduke tried to stop me—He published something or other—My army had already advanced a league and a half—I did not even condescend to make any disposition. All the world knows how such things are managed when I am in the field. I could not help the Danube rising sixteen feet in one night—Ah! without that, there would have been an end of the Austrian monarchy. But it was written in heaven that I should marry an Archduchess.» (This was said with an air of much gaiety.) «In the same manner, in Russia, I could not prevent its freezing. They told me every morning that I had lost ten thousand horses during the night.—Well, farewell to you!» He bade them adieu five or six times in the course of the harangue, but always returned to the subject. «Our Norman horses are less hardy than those of the Russians—they sink under ten degrees of cold (beneath zero). It is the same with the men. Look at the Bavarians; there is not one left.—Perhaps it may be said that I stopped too long at Moscow; that may be true, but the weather was fine—the winter came on prematurely—besides, I expected peace. On the 5th October, I sent Lauriston to treat. I thought of going to St Petersburgh, and I had time

enough to have done so, or to have gone to the south of Russia, or to Smolensk. Well, we will make head at Wilna; Murat is left there. Ha, ha, ha! It is a great political game. Nothing venture, nothing win—It is but one step from the sublime to the ludicrous. The Russians have shown they have character—their Emperor is beloved by his people—they have clouds of Cossacks—it is something to have such a kingdom—the peasants of the crown love their government—the nobility are all mounted on horseback. They proposed to me to set the slaves at liberty, but that I would not consent to—they would have massacred every one. I made regular war upon the Emperor Alexander, but who could have expected such a blow as the burning of Moscow? Now they would lay it on us, but it was in fact themselves who did it. That sacrifice would have done honour to ancient Rome.»

He returned to his favourite purpose of checking the Russians, who had just annihilated his Grand Army, by raising a large body of Polish lancers, to whom, as things stood, it would have been difficult to have proposed any adequate motive for exertion. The fire went out, and the counsellors listened in frozen despair, while, keeping himself warm by walking up and down, and by his own energies, the Emperor went on with his mono-

logue; now betraying, in spite of himself, feelings and sentiments which he would have concealed; now dwelling upon that which he wished others to believe; and often repeating, as the burden of his harangue, the aphorism which he has rendered immortal, concerning the vicinity of the sublime and the ludicrous.

His passage through Silesia being mentioned, he answered in a doubtful tone, « Ha, Prussia? » as if questioning the security of that route. At length he decided to depart in good earnest; cut short the respectful wishes for the preservation of his health with the brief assurance, that he « could not be in better health were the very devil in him; » and threw himself into the humble sledge which carried Cæsar and his fortunes. The horses sprung forward, nearly overturning the carriage as it crossed the court-yard gate, and disappeared in the darkness. Such is the lively account of the Abbé de Pradt, who declares solemnly, that on taxing his memory to the utmost, he accuses himself of neither want of accuracy nor forgetfulness. Napoleon does not deny that such a long conversation took place, but alleges that the abbé has caricatured it. In the mean while, he said he scratched an order for Monsieur l'Ambassadeur to return immediately to Paris; which, considering what had happened in Russia,

and was about to happen in Poland, could not but be a most welcome mandate, especially as it was likely to be soon enforced by the lances of the Cossacks.

Napoleon continued to pass on with as much speed as possible. He said, when at St Helena, that he was nigh being arrested in Silesia. « But the Prussians, » he said, « passed the time in consulting which they ought to have employed in action. They acted like the Saxons, of whom Charles XII. said gaily, when he left Dresden, « They will be deliberating to-day whether they should have arrested me yesterday. » If such an idea was entertained by any one, it may have been by some of the Tugend-Bund, who might think it no crime to seize on one who made universal liberty his spoil. But we do not believe that Frederick ever harboured the thought, while he continued in alliance with France.

Meanwhile, Napoleon continued his journey in secrecy, and with rapidity. On the 14th December he was at Dresden, where he had a long private conference with the good old king, who did not feel his gratitude to the Emperor, as a benefactor, abated by his accumulated misfortunes. The interview—how different from their last—was held in the hotel where Buonaparte alighted, and where Augustus came to visit him incognito. On the 18th, in the evening, he arrived at Paris,

where the city had been for two days agitated by the circulation of the 29th Bulletin, in which the veil, though with a reluctant hand, was raised up to show the disasters of the Russian war.

It may not be thought minute to mention, that Napoleon and his attendant had difficulty in procuring admittance to the Tuileries at so late an hour. The Empress had retired to her private apartment. Two figures muffled in furs entered the ante-room, and one of them directed his course to the door of the Empress's sleeping-chamber. The lady in waiting hastened to throw herself betwixt the intruder and the entrance, but, recognizing the Emperor, she shrieked aloud, and alarmed Maria Louisa, who entered the ante-room. Their meeting was extremely affectionate, and showed, that, amidst all his late losses, Napoleon had still domestic happiness within his reach.

We return to the Grand Army, or rather to the assemblage of those who had once belonged to it, for of an army it had scarce the semblance left. The soldiers of the Imperial Guard, who had hitherto made it their pride to preserve some degree of discipline, would, after the departure of Napoleon, give obedience to no one else. Murat, to whom the chief command had been delegated, seemed scarcely to use it, nor when he did was he obeyed. If Ney,

and some of the mareschals, still retained authority, they were only attended to from habit, or because the instinct of discipline revived when the actual battle drew near. They could not, however, have offered any effectual defence, nor could they have escaped actual slaughter and dispersion, had it not been for Loison's troops, who continued to form the rear-guard, and who, never having been on the eastern side of the fatal Beresina, had, amid great suffering, still preserved sufficient discipline to keep their ranks, behave like soldiers, and make themselves be respected, not only by the Cossacks, but by Tschaplitz, Witgenstein, and the Russians detached from the main army, who followed them close, and annoyed them constantly. The division of Loison remained like a shield, to protect the disorderly retreat of the main body.

Still, some degree of order is so essential to human society, that, even in that disorganized mass, the stragglers, which now comprehended almost the whole army, divided into little bands who assisted each other, and had sometimes the aid of a miserable horse, which, when it fell down under the burden of what they had piled on it, was torn to pieces and eaten, while life was yet palpitating in its veins. These bands had chiefs selected from among themselves. But this species of union, though advantageous on the whole, led to par-

ticular evils. Those associated into such a fraternity would communicate to none save those of their own party, a mouthful of rye-dough, which, seasoned with gunpowder for want of salt, and eaten with a bouillé of horse-flesh, formed the best part of their food. Neither would they permit a stranger to warm himself at their fires, and when spoil was found, two of these companies often, especially if of different countries, fought for the possession of it, and a handful of meal was a sufficient temptation for putting to death the wretch who could not defend his booty. The prisoners, it is said (and we heartily wish the fact could be refuted), were parked every night, without receiving any victuals whatsoever, and perished, like impounded cattle, from want of food, cold, and the delirious fury which such treatment inspired. Among these unfortunates some became cannibals, and the same horrible reproach has been cast on the French themselves.

To enhance misfortunes so dreadful, the cold, which had been for some time endurable, increased on the 6th December, to the most bitter degree of frost, being twenty-seven or twenty-eight degrees below zero. Many dropped down and expired in silence, the blood of others was determined to the head by the want of circulation; it gushed at length from eyes and mouth, and the wretches sunk down

on the gory snow, and were relieved by death. At the night bivouacs, the soldiers approached their frozen limbs to the fire so closely, that, falling asleep in that posture, their feet were scorched to the bone, while their hair was frozen to the ground. In this condition they were often found by the Cossacks, and happy were those upon whom the pursuers bestowed a thrust with the lance to finish their misery. Other horrors there were, which are better left in silence. Enough has been said to show, that such a calamity, in such an extent, never before darkened the pages of history. In this horrible retreat, twenty thousand recruits had joined the army since crossing the Beresina, where, including the corps of Oudinot and Victor, they amounted to eighty thousand men. But of this sum of eighty thousand men, one-half perished betwixt the Beresina and the walls of Wilna.

In such a plight did the army arrive at Wilna, where great provision had been made for their reception. The magazines were groaning with plenty, but, as at Smolensk, the administrators and commissioners, terrified for their own responsibility, dared not issue provisions to a disorderly mob, who could neither produce authority for drawing rations, nor give a regular receipt. The famished wretches fell down in the street before the magazines, and died there, cursing with their latest breath the

ill-timed punctiliousness of office, which refused to starving men the morsel that might have saved their lives. In other places of the town, stores both of provision and liquor were broken open by the desperate soldiery, plundered, and wasted. Numbers became intoxicated, and to those, as they sunk down in the street, death came before sobriety. The sick who went to the hospitals found them crowded not only with the dying, but with dead, whose corpses were left to freeze or to putrefy on the stairs and in the corridors, and sometimes in the apartments of those who yet survived. Such were the comforts of Wilna, from which so much had been hoped.

Still, however, some of the citizens, moved by pity or terror, or from desire of gain (for many soldiers had still about their persons some remnants of the spoils of Moscow), were willing to give lodging and food to these exhausted phantoms, who begged such relief sometimes with furious threats and imprecations, sometimes in the plaintive tone of men ready to perish. Distributions began also to be made at the public stores; and men who for long had not eat a morsel of bread, or reposed themselves upon any better lair than the frozen earth, or under any other canopy save that of the snow-fraught sky, deemed it Paradise to enjoy the most common household comforts, of which we think so little while we

enjoy them, yet are miserable when they are abridged or withdrawn. Some wept for joy at receiving an ordinary loaf of bread, and finding themselves at liberty to eat it, seated, and under a roof.

On a sudden the repast, which seemed earnest of a return to safety and to social life, was disturbed by a distant cannonade, which came nigher and nigher—then by the fire of musketry—at length by their own drums beating to arms in the streets. Every alarm was in vain; even the Imperial Guard no longer attended to the summons. The soldiers were weary of their lives, and it seemed as if they would have been contented to perish like the Jews in the wilderness, with their food betwixt their teeth. At length, the distant Hourra, and the nearer cry of Cossacks! Cossacks! which for some time had been their most available signal for marching, compelled them to tear themselves from their refreshment, and rush into the street. There they found their rear-guard and Loison, although they had been reinforced by the body of Bavarians commanded by Wrede, who had been left on the verge of Volhynia, hurrying into the town in disorder like men defeated, and learned that they had been driven back by Witgenstein, with Platoff and other partisan leaders, who had followed them up to the gates.

Wilna, besides the immense magazines belonging to the French army, contained a vast deposit of wealth and property, which had been left there in the advance upon Moscow, and, in particular, a quantity of treasure belonging to Napoleon. The town, though open, might have been made good till the magazines were destroyed and the baggage removed; but such was the confusion of the moment, that the Russians forced their way into the town by one access, whilst the French left it by another, directing their flight upon Kowno, with the most valuable part of their baggage, or such as could be most speedily harnessed. The inhabitants of the town, the lower orders that is, and particularly the Jews, now thought of propitiating the victors by butchering the wretches whom they had received into their houses; or, at best, stripping and thrusting them naked into the streets. For this inhumanity the Jews are said to have been afterwards punished by the Russians, who caused several of them to be hanged.

Meanwhile the flying column had attained a hill and defile, called Ponari, when the carriages became entangled, and at length one of the treasure-waggons being overturned, burst, and discovered its contents. All shadow of discipline was then lost; and, as if to anticipate the Russians, the French soldiers themselves fell upon the baggage, broke open the wains,

and appropriated their contents. The Cossacks rode up during the fray, and so rich was the booty, that even they were content to plunder in company, suspending for the instant their national animosity, where there seemed wealth enough for all, and no time to lose in fighting. Yet, it is said that the privates of the Imperial Guard displayed a rare example of honour and discipline. The Count de Turenne, having beaten off the Cossacks who pressed in, distributed the private treasure of Napoleon among his Guard, the individuals of which afterwards restored them. « Not a single piece of money, » says Ségur, « was lost. » This, however, must be partly imagination; for many of the Guard fell after this, and the Cossacks, who became their executors, could have had little idea of making restitution.

It is not worth while to trace further the flight of this miserable body of wanderers. They arrived at length at Kowno, the last town of Russian Poland, Ney alone endeavouring to give them some military direction and assistance; while they were at every instant deserting him and themselves. At Kowno, it seems that about one thousand men were still under arms, about twenty times that number in total dispersion. The pursuit of the Russians appeared to cease after the fugitives had recrossed the Niemen on the ice; they did not chuse to push the war into Prussia.

At Gumbinnen, the remaining mareschals and commanders held a council, in which Murat gave way to the stifled resentment he had long entertained against his brother-in-law. He had been displeased with Napolean, for not severely repressing the insolence with which, as he conceived, he had been treated by Davoust, and at another time by Ney; and he openly inveighed against his relative as a madman, upon whose word no reliance was to be placed. In these moments of anger and mutiny, Murat blamed himself for rejecting the proposals of the English. Had he not done so, he said, he might still have been a great king, like the sovereigns of Austria and Russia. « These kings, » answered Davoust, bitterly, « are monarchs by the grace of God, by the sanction of time, and the course of custom. But you—you are only a king by the grace of Napoleon, and through the blood of Frenchmen. You are grossly ungrateful, and as such I will denounce you to the Emperor. » Such was this strange scene, of which the mareschals were silent witnesses. It served to show how little unity there was in their councils, when the Master Spirit ceased to preside among them.

From Gumbinnen the French went to show their miseries at Konigsberg. Everywhere they were coldly, yet not coarsely treated by the Prussians, who had before felt their op-

pression, but did not consider them in their present state as becoming objects of vengeance. At Konigsberg they learnt the fate of their two extreme wings, which was of a nature to close all hopes.

On the right of the French original line of advance, Schwartzenberg had no sooner learned that the Emperor was totally defeated, and his army irretrievably dispersed, than, in the quality of a mere auxiliary, he thought himself no longer entitled to hazard a single Austrian life in the quarrel. There was an armistice concluded between the Austrians and Russians, by the terms of which they agreed to manœuvre as at a game of chess, but not to fight. Thus, when the Russians should gain such a position, as in actual war would have given them an advantage, the Austrians were under the engagement to retreat; and the campaign resembled nothing so much as a pacific field-day, in which two generals in the same service venture upon a trial of skill. Schwartzenberg, by his manœuvres, protected the French corps under Régnier as long as possible, obtained good terms for Warsaw, and gained for Régnier three days' advantage, when at last he ceased to cover the place. Having thus protected his allies to the last, he retired into the Austrian territories; and although Régnier was finally overtaken and surprised at Khalish, it could not be imputed to Schwartzenberg's desertion

of him, but to his own making too long a halt to protect some Polish dépôts. The relics of Régnier's army, such at least as fled into the Austrian territories, were well received there, and afterwards restored to their own banners. Still the alliance with Austria, which in one sense had cost Napoleon so dear, was now dissolved, and his right wing totally dissipated by the defection of his allies. On the left wing matters had no better, or rather, they had a much worse appearance.

During the eventful six months of the Russian campaign, Macdonald, who commanded the left wing, had remained in Courland, with an army of about 30,000 men, of whom 22,000 were Prussians, the rest Germans of different countries. It would seem that Napoleon had been averse from the beginning to employ these unwilling auxiliaries upon any service where their defection might influence the other parts of his army. Yet they behaved well upon several occasions, when Macdonald had occasion to repel the attacks and sallies of the numerous garrison of Riga, and their active exertions enabled him to save the park of heavy artillery destined for the siege of that place, which had almost fallen into the hands of the Russian general, Lewis, at Mittau, on the 29th of September. But on this occasion, though having every reason to be pleased with the soldiers, Macdonald saw room to suspect

their leader, Yorck, of coldness to the French cause. That officer was, indeed, engaged in a service which at heart he detested. He was one of the Tugend-Bund, so often mentioned, an ardent Prussian patriot, and eager to free his native country from a foreign yoke. He therefore eagerly watched for a plausible opportunity when he might, without dishonour, disunite his forces from those of the French mareschal.

About the beginning of December, the situation of Macdonald became precarious. Nothing was heard on every side, save of the rout and disasters of the French Grand Army, and the mareschal anxiously expected orders for a retreat while it was yet open to him. But such was the confusion at the head-quarters after the Emperor's departure, that neither Murat nor Berthier thought of sending the necessary authority to Macdonald; and when they did, though the order to retreat might have reached him in five days, it was ten days on the road.

He commenced his retreat upon Tilsit, his van-guard consisting of Massenbach's Prussian division, chiefly cavalry, he himself following with the Bavarians, Saxons, etc., and Yorck bringing up the rear with 15,000 Prussians, the residue of that auxiliary army. In this order, with the Prussians divided into two corps, and his own posted between them, as if to secure against their combining, the mareschal march-

ed on in sufficient anxiety, but without complaint on his side, or difficulties on that of the Prussian general. But when the mareschal, upon 28th January, arrived at Tilsit, which was in the line of their retreat, and had sent forward the cavalry of Massenbach as far as Regnitz, the troops of Yorck in the rear had detached themselves so far that Macdonald was obliged to halt for them. He sent letters to Yorck, pressing him to come up—he sent to the cavalry of Massenbach in the van, commanding them to return. From Yorck came no answer. At Regnitz, the French general, Bachelu, who had been sent to act as adjutant-general with Massenbach's corps, could find no obedience. The colonels of the Prussian cavalry objected to the weather, and the state of the roads; they would not give the order to sound to horse; and when the horses were at length reluctantly ordered out and produced, the soldiers were equally restive, they would not mount. While the Prussian troops were in this state of mutiny, a Russian emissary was heard to press them to deliver up the Frenchman; but the soldiers, though resolved to leave Bachelu, would not betray him. The proposal shocked their feelings of honour, and they mounted and marched back to Tilsit, to restore Bachelu to Macdonald's army. But their purpose was unchanged. As at Regnitz they had refused to mount their horses, so at

Tilsit they refused to alight. At length they were prevailed upon to dismount and retire to their quarters, but it was only a feint; for, shortly after they were supposed asleep, the Prussians mounted in great silence, and, with Massenbach and their officers at their head, marched off to join their countrymen under Yorck.

That general had, now and for ever, separated his troops from the French. Upon 30th December, he had concluded an armistice with the Russian general, Dibbeitsch. By this agreement, the Prussian troops were to be cantoned in their own territories, and remain neutral for two months; at the end of that period, if their king so determined, they should be at liberty to rejoin the French troops. Both Yorck and Massenbach wrote to Macdonald announcing their secession from his army. Yorck contented himself with stating, that he cared not what opinion the world might form on his conduct; it was dictated by the purest motives, his duty to his troops and to his country. Massenbach expressed his respect and esteem for General Macdonald, and declared, that his reason for leaving him without an interview, was the fear he felt that his personal regard for the mareschal might have prevented his obeying the call of duty.

Thus did a Prussian general first set the example of deserting the cause in which he

served so unwillingly; an example which soon spread fast and far. It was a choice of difficulties on Yorck's side, for his zeal as a patriot was in some degree placed in opposition to the usual ideas of soldierly honour. But he had not left Macdonald till the mareschal's safety, and that of the remainder of his army, was in some measure provided for. He was out of the Russian territory, and free, or nearly so, from Russian pursuit. Yorck had become neutral, but not the enemy of his late commander.

Here the question arises, how long were the Prussians to be held bound to sacrifice their blood for the foreigners, by whom they had been conquered, pillaged, and oppressed; and to what extent were they bound to endure adversity for those, who had uniformly trampled on them during their prosperity? One thing, we believe, we may affirm with certainty, namely, that Yorck acted entirely on his own responsibility, and without any encouragement, direct or indirect, from his sovereign. Nay, there is room to suppose, that though the armistice of Taurogen was afterwards declared good service by the King of Prussia, yet Yorck was not entirely forgiven by his prince for having entered into it. It was one of the numerous cases, in which a subject's departing from the letter of the sovereign's command, although for that sovereign's more effectual

service, is still a line of conduct less grateful than implicit obedience. Upon receiving the news, Frederick disavowed the conduct of his general, and appointed Massenbach and him to be sent to Berlin for trial. But the officers retained their authority, for the Prussian army and people considered their sovereign as acting under the restraint of the French troops under Augereau, who then occupied his capital.

Macdonald, with the remains of his army, reduced to about nine thousand men, accomplished his retreat to Konigsberg after a sharp skirmish.

And thus ended the memorable Russian expedition, the first of Napoleon's undertakings in which he was utterly defeated, and of which we scarce know whether most to wonder at the daring audacity of the attempt, or the terrific catastrophe. The loss of the Grand Army was total, and the results are probably correctly stated by Boutourlin, as follows:—

Slain in battle	125,000
Died from fatigue, hunger, and the severity of the climate	132,000
Prisoners, comprehending 48 generals, 3000 officers, and upwards of 190,000 men	193,000
Total....	450,000

The relics of the troops which escaped from that overwhelming disaster, independent of the two auxiliary armies of Austrians and Prus-

sians, who were never much engaged in its terrors, might be about forty thousand men, of whom scarcely ten thousand were Frenchmen. The Russians, notwithstanding the care that was taken to destroy these trophies, took seventy-five eagles, colours, or standards, and upwards of nine hundred pieces of cannon.

Thus had the greatest military captain of the age, at the head of an innumerable array, rushed upon his gigantic adversary, defeated his army, and destroyed, or been the cause of the destruction of his capital, only to place himself in a situation where the ruin of nearly the whole of his own force, without even the intervention of a general action, became the indispensable price of his safe return.

The causes of this total and calamitous failure lay in miscalculations, both moral and physical, which were involved in the first concoction of the enterprise, and began to operate from its very commencement. We are aware that this is, with the idolators of Napoleon, an unpalatable view of the case. They believe, according to the doctrine which he himself promulgated, that he could be conquered by the elements alone. This was what he averred in the twenty-ninth bulletin. Till the 6th November, he stated, that he had been uniformly successful. The snow then fell, and in six days destroyed the character of

the army, depressed their courage, elated that of the «despicable» Cossacks, deprived the French of artillery, baggage, and cavalry, and reduced them, with little aid from the Russians, to the melancholy state in which they returned to Poland. This opinion Napoleon wished to perpetuate in a medal, on which the retreat from Moscow is represented by the figure of Eolus blowing upon the soldiers, who are shown shrinking from the storm, or falling under it. The same statement he always supported; and it is one of those tenets which his extravagant admirers are least willing to relinquish.

Three questions, however, remain to be examined, ere we can subscribe to this doctrine.—1. Does the mere fall of snow, nay, a march through a country covered with it, necessarily, and of itself, infer the extent of misfortune here attributed to its agency?—2. Was not the possibility of such a storm a contingency which ought in reason to have entered into Napoleon's calculations?—3. Was it the mere severity of the snow-storm, dreadful as it was, which occasioned the destruction of Buonaparte's army; or, did not the effects of climate rather come in to aid various causes of ruin, which were inherent in this extravagant expedition from the very beginning, and were operating actively when the weather merely came to their assistance?

On the first question it is needless to say much. A snow, accompanied with hard frost, is not necessarily destructive to a retreating army. The weaker individuals must perish, but, to the army, it affords, if they are provided for the season, better opportunities of moving than rainy and open weather. In the snow, hard frozen upon the surface, as it is in Russia and Canada, the whole face of the country becomes a road; and an army, lightly equipped and having sledges instead of wains, may move in as many parallel columns as they will, instead of being confined, as in moist weather, to one high-road, along which the divisions must follow each other in succession. Such an extension of the front, by multiplying the number of marching columns, must be particularly convenient to an army, which, like that of Napoleon, is obliged to maintain itself as much as possible at the expense of the country. Where there are only prolonged columns, following each other over the same roads, the marauders from the first body must exhaust the country on each side; so that the corps which follow must send their purveyors beyond the ground which has been already pillaged, until at length the distance becomes so great, that the rearward must satisfy themselves with gleaning after the wasteful harvest of those who have preceded them. Supposing six, eight, or ten columns marching in pa-

rallel lines upon the same front, and leaving an interval betwixt each, they will cover six, eight, or ten times the breadth of country, and of course supply themselves more plentifully, as well as much more easily. Such columns, keeping a parallel front, can, if attacked, receive reciprocal aid by lateral movements more easily than when assistance must be sent from the van to the rear of one long moving line; and the march being lateral on such occasions, does not infer the loss of time, and other inconveniences, inferred by a countermarch from the front to support the rear. Lastly, the frost often renders bridges unnecessary, fills ravines, and makes morasses passable; thus compensating, in some degree, to a marching army, for the rigorous temperature to which it subjects them.

But, 2dly, It may be asked, if frost and snow are so irresistible and destructive in Russia, as to infer the destruction of whole armies, why did not these casualties enter into the calculations of so great a general entering on such an immense undertaking? Does it never snow in Russia, or is frost a rare phenomenon there in the month of November? It is said that the cold weather began earlier than usual. This, we are assured, was not the case; but at any rate it was most unwise to suffer the safety of an army, and an army of such numbers and

importance, to depend on the mere chance of a frost setting in a few days sooner or later.

The fact is, that Napoleon, whose judgment was seldom misled save by the ardour of his wishes, had foreseen, in October, the coming of the frost, as he had been aware, in July, of the necessity of collecting sufficient supplies of food for his army, yet without making adequate provision against what he knew was to happen, in either case. In the 22d bulletin it is intimated, that the Moskwa, and other rivers of Russia, might be expected to be frozen over about the middle of November, which ought to have prepared the Emperor for the snow and frost commencing five or six days sooner; which actually took place. In the 26th bulletin, the necessity of winter-quarters is admitted, and the Emperor is represented as looking luxuriously around him, to consider whether he should chuse them in the south of Russia, or in the friendly country of Poland. The weather is then stated to be fine, « but on the first days of November cold was to be expected. Winter-quarters, therefore, must be thought upon; the cavalry, above all, stand in need of them.»

It is impossible that he, under whose eye, or by whose hand, these bulletins were drawn up, could have been surprised by the arrival of snow on the 6th November. It was a probability foreseen, though left unprovided for.

Even the most ordinary precaution, that of rough-shoeing the horses of the cavalry and the draught-horses, was totally neglected; for the bulletins complain of the shoes being smooth. This is saying, in other words, that the animals had not been new-shod at all; for French horses may be termed always rough-shod, until the shoes are grown old and worn smooth through use. If, therefore, frost and snow be so very dangerous to armies, Napoleon wilfully braved their rigour, and, by his want of due preparations, brought upon himself the very disaster of which he complained so heavily.

Thirdly, Though unquestionably the severity of the frost did greatly increase the distress and loss of an army suffering under famine, nakedness, and privations of every kind, yet it was neither the first, nor in any respect the principal, cause of their disasters. The reader must keep in remembrance the march through Lithuania, in which, without a blow struck, Napoleon lost ten thousand horses at once, and nearly a hundred thousand men, when passing through a country which was friendly. Did this loss, which happened in June and July, arise from the premature snow, as it has been called, of the 6th of November? No, surely. It arose from what the bulletin itself describes as «the uncertainty, the distresses, the marches and countermarches of the troops, their fa-

tigues and sufferances;» to the system, in short, of forced marches, by which, after all, Napoleon was unable to gain any actual advance. This cost him one-fourth, or nearly so, of his army, before a blow was struck. If we suppose that he left on both his flanks, and in his rear, a force of 100,000 men, under Macdonald, Schwartzenberg, Oudinot, and others, he commenced the actual invasion of Russia Proper with 200,000 soldiers. A moiety of this large force perished before he reached Moscow, which he entered at the head of less than 100,000 men. The ranks had been thinned by fatigue, and the fields of battle and hospitals must answer for the remainder. Finally, Napoleon left Moscow on the 19th October, as a place where he could not remain, and yet from which he saw no safe mode of exit. He was then at the head of about 120,000 men; so much was his army recruited by convalescents, the collection of stragglers, and some reserves which had been brought up. He fought the unavailing though most honourably sustained battle of Mala-Yarowslavetz; failed in forcing his way to Kalouga and Toula; and, like a stag at bay, was forced back on the wasted and broken-up road to Smolensk by Borodino. On this road was fought the battle of Wiazma, in which the French loss was very considerable; and his columns were harassed by the Cossacks at every point of their march, and

many thousands of prisoners were taken. Two battles so severely fought, besides the defeat of Murat and constant skirmishes, cost the French in killed and wounded (and every wounded man was lost to Napoleon,) not less than 25,000 men; and so far had the French army been diminished.

This brought him to the 6th November, until which day not a flake had fallen of that snow to which all his disasters are attributed, but which in fact did not commence until he had in a great measure experienced them. By this time, also, his wings and reserves had undergone severe fighting and great loss, without any favourable results. Thus, well nigh three-fourths of his original army were destroyed, and the remnant reduced to a most melancholy and disorderly condition, before commencement of the storm to which he found it afterwards convenient to impute his calamities. It is scarcely necessary to notice, that when the snow did begin to fall, it found Napoleon not a victor, but a fugitive, quitting ground before his antagonists, and indebted for his safety, not to the timidity of the Russians, but to the over-caution of their general. The Cossacks, long before the snow-tempest commenced, were muttering against Kutousof for letting these skeletons, as they called the French army, walk back into a bloodless grave.

When the severe frost came, it aggravated greatly the misery, and increased the loss, of the French army. But Winter was only the ally of the Russians; not, as has been contended, their sole protectress. She rendered the retreat of the Grand Army more calamitous, but it had already been an indispensable measure, and was in the act of being executed at the lance-point of the Cossacks before the storms of the north contributed to overwhelm the invaders.

What, then, occasioned this most calamitous catastrophe? We venture to reply, that a moral error, or rather a crime, converted Napoleon's wisdom into folly; and that he was misled, by the injustice of his views, into the great political, nay, military errors, which he acted upon in his attempt to realize them.

We are aware there are many who think that the justice of a quarrel is of little moment, providing the aggressor has strength and courage to make good what his adversary murmurs against as wrong. With such reasoners, the race is uniformly to the swift, and the battle to the strong; and they reply to others with the profane jest of the King of Prussia, that the Deity always espouses the cause of the most powerful. But the maxim is as false as it is impious. Without expecting miracles in this later age, we know that the world is subjected to moral as well as physical laws, and

that the breach of the former frequently carries even a temporal punishment along with it. Let us try by this test the conduct of Napoleon in the Russian war.

The causes assigned for his breach with Russia, unjust in their essence, had been put upon a plan of settlement; yet his armies continued to bear down upon the frontiers of the Russian Empire; so that to have given up the questions in dispute, with the French bayonets at his breast, would have been on the part of Alexander a surrender of the national independence. The demands of Napoleon, unjust in themselves, and attempted to be enforced by means of intimidation, it was impossible for a proud people, and a high-spirited prince, to comply with. Thus the first act of Buonaparte went to excite a national feeling, from the banks of the Borysthenes to the wall of China, and to unite against him the wild and uncivilized inhabitants of an extended empire, possessed by a love to their religion, their government, and their country, and having a character of stern devotion, which he was incapable of estimating. It was a remarkable characteristic of Napoleon, that when he had once fixed his opinion, he saw every thing as he wished to see it, and was apt to dispute even realities, if they did not coincide with his preconceived ideas. He had persuaded himself, that to beat an army and subdue a capital, was, with the influence

of his personal ascendancy, all that was necessary to obtain a triumphant peace. He had especially a confidence in his own command over the minds of such as he had been personally intimate with. Alexander's disposition, he believed, was perfectly known to him; and he entertained no doubt, that by beating his army, and taking his capital, he should resume the influence which he had once held over the Russian Emperor, by granting him a peace upon moderate terms, and in which the acknowledgment of the victor's superiority would have been the chief advantage stipulated. For this he hurried on by forced marches, losing so many thousands of men and horses in Lithuania, which an attention to ordinary rules would have saved from destruction. For this, when his own prudence, and that of his council, joined in recommending a halt at Vitepsk or at Smolensk, he hurried forward to the fight, and to the capture of the metropolis, which he had flattered himself was to be the signal of peace. His wishes were apparently granted. Borodino, the bloodiest battle of our battling age, was gained—Moscow was taken—but he had totally failed to calculate the effect of these events upon the Russians and their Emperor. When he expected their submission, and a ransom for their capital, the city was consumed in his presence; yet even the desertion and destruction of Moscow could not tear the veil

from his eyes, or persuade him that the people and their prince would prefer death to disgrace. It was his reluctance to relinquish the visionary hopes which egotism still induced him to nourish, that prevented his quitting Moscow a month earlier than he did. He had no expectation that the mild climate of Fontainebleau would continue to gild the ruins of Moscow till the arrival of December; but he could not forego the flattering belief, that a letter and proposal of pacification must at last fulfil the anticipations which he so ardently entertained. It was only the attack upon Murat that finally dispelled this hope.

Thus a hallucination, for such it may be termed, led this great soldier into a train of conduct, which, as a military critic, he would have been the first to condemn, and which was the natural consequence of his deep moral error. He was hurried by this self-opinion, this ill-founded trust in the predominance of his own personal influence, into a gross neglect of the usual and prescribed rules of war. He put in motion an immense army, too vast in numbers to be supported either by the supplies of the country through which they marched, or by the provisions they could transport along with them. And when, plunging into Russia, he defeated her armies and took her metropolis, he neglected to calculate his line of advance on such an extent of base, as should enable

him to consolidate his conquests, and turn to real advantage the victories which he attained. His army was but precariously connected with Lithuania when he was at Moscow, and all communication was soon afterwards entirely destroyed. Thus, one unjust purpose, strongly and passionately entertained, marred the councils of the wise, and rendered vain the exertions of the brave. We may read the moral in the words of Claudian,—

> ———— Jam non ad culmina rerum
> Injustos crevisse queror; tolluntur in altum,
> Ut lapsu graviore ruant
>
> CLAUDIAN. *in Rufinum*, Lib I, v. 21

CHAPTER XV.

Effects of Napoleon's return upon the Parisians.—Congratulations and Addresses by all the public Functionaries.—Conspiracy of Malet—very nearly successful — How at last defeated.—The impression made by this event upon Buonaparte, both while in Russia, and on his return —Discussions with the Pope, who is brought to France, but remains inflexible.—State of affairs in Spain —Napoleon's great and successful exertions to recruit his Army.—Guards of Honour.—In the month of April, the army is raised to 350,000 men, independently of the troops left in garrison in Germany, and in Spain and Italy.

UPON the morning succeeding his return, which was like the sudden appearance of one dropped from the heavens, Paris resounded with the news; which had, such was the force of Napoleon's character, and the habits of subjection to which the Parisians were inured, the effect of giving a new impulse to the whole capital. If the impressions made by the 29th bulletin could not be effaced, they were carefully concealed. The grumblers suppressed their mur-

murs, which had begun to be alarming. The mourners dried their tears, or shed them in solitude. The safe return of Napoleon was a sufficient cure for the loss of five hundred thousand men, and served to assuage the sorrows of as many widows and orphans. The Emperor convoked the Council of State. He spoke with apparent frankness of the misfortunes which had befallen his army, and imputed them all to the snow. « All had gone well, » he said, « Moscow was in our power—every obstacle was overcome—the conflagration of the city had produced no change on the flourishing condition of the French army; but winter has been productive of a general calamity, in consequence of which the army had sustained very great losses. » One would have thought, from his mode of stating the matter, that the snow had surprised him in the midst of victory, and not in the course of a disastrous and inevitable retreat.

The *Moniteur* was at first silent on the news from Russia, and announced the advent of the Emperor as if he had returned from Fontainebleau; but after an interval of this apparent coldness, like the waters of a river in the thaw, accumulating behind, and at length precipitating themselves over, a barrier of ice, arose the general gratulation of the public functionaries, whose power and profit must stand or fall with the dominion of the Emperor, and whose

voices alone were admitted to represent those of the people. The cities of Rome, Florence, Milan, Turin, Hamburgh, Amsterdam, Mentz, and whatever others there were of consequence in the empire, joined in the general asseveration, that the presence of the Emperor alone was all that was necessary to convert disquietude into happiness and tranquillity. The most exaggerated praise of Napoleon's great qualities, the most unlimited devotion to his service, the most implicit confidence in his wisdom, were the theme of these addresses. Their flattery was not only ill-timed, considering the great loss which the country had sustained; but it was so grossly exaggerated in some instances, as to throw ridicule even upon the high talents of the party to whom it was addressed, as daubers are often seen to make a ridiculous caricature of the finest original. In the few circles where criticism on these effusions of loyalty might be whispered, the authors of the addresses were compared to the duped devotee in Molière's comedy, who, instead of sympathizing in his wife's illness, and the general indisposition of his family, only rejoices to hear that Tartuffe is in admirable good health. Yet there were few even among these scoffers who would have dared to stay behind, had they been commanded to attend the Emperor to Notre Dame, that Te Deum might be celebrated for the safe return

of Napoleon, though purchased by the total destruction of his great army.

But it was amongst the public offices that the return of the Emperor, so unexpectedly, produced the deepest sensation. They were accustomed to go on at a moderate rate with the ordinary routine of duty, while the Emperor was on any expedition; but his return had the sudden effect of the appearance of the master in the school, from which he had been a short time absent. All was bustle, alertness, exertion, and anticipation. On the present occasion, double diligence, or the show of it, was exerted; for all feared, and some with reason, that their conduct on a late event might have incurred the severe censure of the Emperor. We allude to the conspiracy of Malet, a singular incident, the details of which we have omitted till now.

During Buonaparte's former periods of absence, the government of the interior of France, under the management of Cambacérès, went on in the ordinary course, as methodically, though not so actively, as when Napoleon was at the Tuileries; the system of administration was accurate, that of superintendence not less so. The obligations of the public functionaries were held as strict as those of military men. But during the length of Napoleon's absence on the Russian expedition, a plot was formed, which served to show how little firm was the hold

which the system of the Imperial government had on the feelings of the nation, by what slight means its fall might be effected, and how small an interest a new revolution would have excited. It seemed that the Emperor's power showed stately and stable to the eye, like a tall pine-tree, which, while it spreads its shade broad around, and raises its head to heaven, cannot send its roots, like those of the oak, deep into the bowels of the earth, but, spreading them along the shallow surface, is liable to be overthrown by the first assault of the whirlwind.

The final purpose of Malet is not known He was of noble birth, and served in the Mousquetaires of the royal household before the Revolution, which inclined many to think that he had the interest of the Bourbons in view. As, however, he had risen to the head of chef de brigade in the Republican army, it is more probable that he belonged to the sect of Philadelphes.[1] In 1808, General Malet was com-

[1] A secret society in the army, whose immediate object it was to overthrow the Imperial power, and whose ultimate purposes were not perhaps known to themselves Their founder was Colonel Jacques Joseph Oudet, a Swiss,* at once a debauchee and an enthusiast, on the plan of his countryman Rousseau. He was shot the night before the battle of Wagram, not, as his followers alleged, by a party of Austrians, but by gendarmes, commissioned for

* Col. Oudet was a native of Franche-Comté and not a Swiss Ed

mitted to prison, as concerned in an intrigue against the Emperor; and he was still under the restraint of the police, when he formed the audacious scheme which had so nearly succeeded. While under a confinement now lenient, in a Maison de Santé, he was able to execute, or procure to be executed, a forged paper, purporting to be a decree of the Senate, announcing officially the death of the Emperor, the abolition of the Imperial government, and the establishment of a provisional committee of administration. This document was to appearance attested by the official seal and signatures.

On the 23d of October, at midnight, he escaped from his place of confinement, dressed himself in his full uniform, and, accompanied by a corporal in the dress of an aide-de-camp, repaired to the prison of La Force, where he demanded and obtained the liberation of two generals, Lahorie and Guidal, who were confined under circumstances not dissimilar to his own. They went together to the barracks at the Minims, not then inhabited by any part of

that purpose. His sect continued to subsist, and Masséna did not escape suspicions of being implicated in its intrigues. There was a communication in their name to Lord Wellington, in May, 1809, but the negotiation was not of a character which the British general chose to encourage – SOUTHEY's *History of the Peninsular War*, Vol II p 303

the truest and most attached followers of Napoleon, who, while his power was tottering at home, were strewing with their bones the snows of Russia and the deserts of Spain, but by battalions of raw conscripts and recruits. Here Malet assumed an air of absolute authority, commanded the drums to beat, ordered the troops on parade, and dispatched parties upon different services.

No one disputed his right to be obeyed, and Soulier, commandant of the troops, placed them at his absolute disposal, being partly, as he himself alleged, confused in mind by a fever which afflicted him at the time, partly, perhaps, influenced by a check for 100,000 francs, which was laid down upon his bed, to cover, it was said, a gratuity to the soldiers, and an issue of double pay to the officers. One division seized Savary, the Minister of Police, and conducted him to prison. Another party found it as easy to arrest the person of the Prefect of Police. A battalion of soldiers, under the same authority, occupied the Place de Grêve, and took possession of the Hôtel de Ville; while Comte Frochot, who had been for thirteen years the Prefect of the Seine, stupified by the suddenness of the intelligence, and flattered perhaps, by finding his own name in the list of the provisional committee of government, had the complaisance to put the conspirators in possession of the tower of St Jacques, from

which the tocsin was usually sounded, and get an apartment in the Hôtel de Ville arranged for the reception of the new administration. But the principal conspirator, like Fiesco, at Genoa, perished at the moment when his audacious enterprise seemed about to be crowned with success. Hitherto, none had thought of disobeying the pretended decree of the Senate. Rumour had prepared all men for the death of the Emperor, and the subsequent revolution seemed a consequence so natural, that it was readily acquiesced in, and little interest shown on the subject.

But Malet, who had himself gone to obtain possession of the head-quarters in the Place Vendôme, was unexpectedly resisted by General Hullin. Prepared for every circumstance, the desperado fired a pistol at the head of the general, and wounded him grievously; but, in the mean while, he was himself recognized by Laborde, chief of the military police, who, incredulous that his late captive would have been selected by the Senate for the important duty which he was assuming, threw himself on Malet, and made him prisoner. Thus ended the conspiracy. The soldiers, who had been its blind instruments, were marched back to the barracks. Malet, with twenty-four of his associates, most of them military men, were tried by a military tribunal, and twelve of them were shot in the

plain of Grenelle, 29th of October. He met his death with the utmost firmness. The sun was rising on the Hospital of Invalids, and the workmen were employed in gilding that splendid dome, for which Buonaparte had given express orders, in imitation, it was said, of those which he had seen in Moscow. The prisoner made some remarks upon the improvement which this would be to the capital. As he stepped towards the fatal ground, he said, mysteriously, but sternly, « You have got the tail, but you will not get the head. » From this expression it has been gathered, that, as the conspiracy of the infernal machine, formed originally among the Jacobins, was executed by the Royalists, so this plot was the device of the Royalists, though committed to the execution of Republican hands.[1] The truth, though it must be known to some now alive, has never been made public.

This was the news which reached Buonaparte on the fatal 6th of November, betwixt Wiazma and Smolensk, and which determined his retreat from the army at Smorgoni, and his rapid journey to Paris. It was not so much the conspiracy which alarmed him, as the supineness or levity with which the nation, at least Paris, its capital, seemed ready to

[1] The Memoirs of Fouché contain a specific averment to this effect. See *Mémoires de Fouché*, tome I. p. 219-225. 8vo. Paris, 1824.

abandon the dynasty which he had hoped to render perpetual. He was even startled by the number of executions, and exclaimed against the indiscriminate severity with which so many officers had been led to death, although rather dupes than accomplices of the principal conspirator. « It is a massacre, » he said; « a fusillade! What impression will it make on Paris? »

When Napoleon reached the metropolis, he found the Parisians as little interested in the execution of the criminals, as they had been in their ephemeral success. But the sting remained in his own mind, and on the first audience of his ministers, he exclaimed against Ideology, or, in other words, against any doctrine which, appealing to the general feelings of patriotism or of liberty, should resist the indefeasible and divine right of the sovereign. He sounded the praises of Harlay and Molé, ministers of justice, who had died in protecting the rights of the crown; and exclaimed, that the best death would be that of the soldier who falls on the field of battle, if the end of the magistrate, who dies in defence of the throne and laws, was not still more glorious.

This key-note formed an admirable theme for the flourishes of the various counsellors of the sections, to whom the fate of Frochot, the peccant Prefect, had been submitted with

reference to the extent of his crime and his punishment. Not even the addresses to James II. of Britain (who had at least a hereditary right to the throne he occupied) poured forth such a torrent of professions, or were more indifferently backed with deeds, when the observant courtiers were brought to the proof, than did those of the French functionaries at this period.

« What is life, » said the Comte de Chabrol, who had been created Prefect of Paris in room of the timorous Frochot—« What is life, in comparison to the immense interests which rest on the sacred head of the heir of the empire? For me, whom an unexpected glance of your Imperial eye has called from a distance to a post so eminent, what I most value in the distinction is the honour and right of setting the foremost example of loyal devotion. »

It was the opinion of M. De Fontanes, senator, peer of France, and grand-master of the Imperial University, that « Reason pauses with respect before the mystery of power and obedience, and abandons all inquiry into its nature to that religion which made the persons of kings sacred, after the image of God himself. It is His voice which humbles anarchy and factions, in proclaiming the divine right of sovereigns, it is the Deity him-

self who has made it an unalterable maxim of France, an unchangeable article of the law of our fathers; it is Nature who appoints kings to succeed each other, while reason declares that the royalty itself is immutable. Permit, Sire (he continued), that the University of Paris turn their eyes for a moment from the throne which you fill with so much glory, to the august cradle of the heir of your grandeur. We unite him with your Majesty in the love and respect we owe to both; and swear to him beforehand the same boundless devotion which we owe to your Majesty.»

In better taste, because with less affectation of eloquence, Monsieur Séguier, the President of the Court of Paris, contented himself with declaring, that the magistrates of Paris were the surest supports of the Imperial authority —that their predecessors had encountered perils in defence of monarchy, and they in their turn were ready to sacrifice every thing for the sacred person of the Emperor, and for perpetuating his dynasty.

Under cover of these violent protestations, the unfortunate Frochot escaped, as a disabled vessel drops out of the line of battle under fire of her consorts. He was divested of his offices, but permitted to retire, either to prosecute his studies in Ideology, or to indoctrinate himself into more deep acquaintance in the mysteries

of hereditary right than he had hitherto shown himself possessed of.[1]

We have selected the above examples, not with the purpose of inquiring whether the orators (whom we believe, in their individual capacity, to have been men of honour and talents) did or did not redeem, by their after exertions, the pledges of which they were so profuse; but to mark with deep reprobation the universal system of assentation and simulation, to which even such men did not disdain to lend countenance and example. By such overstrained flatteries and protestations, counsellors are degraded and princes are misled—truth and sincere advice become nauseous to the ear of the sovereign, falsehood grows familiar to the tongue of the subject, and public danger is not discovered until escape or rescue has become impossible.

Yet it cannot be denied, that the universal tenor of these vows and protestations, supported by Buonaparte's sudden arrival and firm attitude, had the effect of suppressing for a time discontents, which were silently making way amongst the French people. The more unthinking were influenced by the tenor of sentiments which seemed to be universal through the empire; and, upon the whole, this universal tide of assentation operated upon

[1] He obtained a pension on the restoration of Louis XVIII.

the internal doubts, sorrows, discontents, and approaching disaffection of the empire, like an effusion of oil on the surface of a torrent, whose murmurs it may check, and whose bubbling ripples it may smooth to the eye, but the deep and dark energy of whose course the unction cannot in reality check, or subdue.

To return to the current of our history. Buonaparte having tried the temper of his Senate, and not finding reason to apprehend any opposition among his subjects, proceeded, while straining every effort, as we shall presently see, for supporting foreign war, to take such means as were in his power for closing domestic wounds, which were the more dangerous that they bled inwardly, without any external effusion, to indicate their existence.

The chief of these dissensions was the dispute with the Pope, which had occasioned, and continued to foster, so much scandal in the Gallic church. We have mentioned already, that the Pope, refusing to consent to any alienation of his secular dominions, had been forcibly carried off from Rome, removed to Grenoble, then brought back over the Alps to Savona, in Italy. Napoleon, who denied that he had authorized this usage towards the Father of the Church, yet continued to detain him at Savona. He was confined there until June, 1812. In the mean time, a deputation of the French bishops were sent

with a decree by Napoleon, determining, that if his Holiness should continue to refuse canonical institution to the French clergy, as he had done ever since the seizure of his city of Rome, and the patrimony of Saint Peter's, a council of prelates should be held for the purpose of pronouncing his deposition.

On 4th September, 1811, the Holy Father admitted the deputation, listened to their arguments with patience, then knelt down before them, and repeated the psalm, *Judica me, Domine.* When the prelates attempted to vindicate themselves, Pius VII., in an animated tone, threatened to fulminate an excommunication against any one who should justify his conduct. Instantly recovering his natural benignity of disposition, he offered his hand to the offending bishops, who kissed it with reverence. The French prelates took leave sorrowfully, and in tears. Several of them showed themselves afterwards opposed to the views of Napoleon, and sustained imprisonment in consequence of their adhesion to what appeared to them their duty.

The chemists of our time have discovered, that some substances can only be decomposed in particular varieties of gas; and apparently it was, in like manner, found that the air of Italy only confirmed the inflexibility of the Pope.

His Holiness was hastily transported to Fon-

tainebleau, where he arrived 19th June, 1812. The French historians boast, that the old man was not thrown into a dungeon, but, on the contrary, was well-lodged in the palace, and was permitted to attend mass,—a wonderful condescension towards the head of the catholic religion. But still he was a captive. He abode at Fontainebleau till Napoleon's return from Russia; and it was on the 19th February, 1813, that the Emperor, having left Saint Cloud under pretext of a hunting-party, suddenly presented himself before his venerable prisoner. He exerted all the powers of influence which he possessed, and they were very great, to induce the pontiff to close with his propositions; and we readily believe that the accounts, which charge him with having maltreated his person, are not only unauthenticated, but positively false. He rendered the submission which he required more easy to the conscience of Pius VII., by not demanding from him any express cession of his temporal rights, and by granting a delay of six months on the subject of canonical instalment. Eleven articles were agreed on, and subscribed by the Emperor and the Pope.

But hardly was this done ere the feud broke out afresh. It was of importance to Napoleon to have the schism soldered up as soon as possible, since the Pope refused to acknowledge the validity of his second marriage,

and, of course, to ratify the legitimacy of his son. He, therefore, published the articles of treaty in the *Moniteur*, as containing a new Concordat. The Pope complained of this, stating, that the articles published were not a Concordat in themselves, but only the preliminaries, on which, after due consideration, such a treaty might have been formed. He was indignant at what he considered as circumvention on the part of the Emperor of France, and refused to abide by the alleged Concordat. Thus failed Napoleon's attempt to close the schism of the church, and the ecclesiastical feuds recommenced with more acrimony than ever.

Looking towards Spain, Napoleon saw his affairs there in a better posture than he could have expected, after the battle of Salamanca, and the capture of Madrid. Lord Wellington, indifferently supported by the Spanish army, among whom quarrels and jealousies soon rose high, had been unable, from want of a sufficient battering-train, to take the fortress of Burgos; and was placed in some danger of being intercepted by Soult's army, who had raised the siege of Cadiz, while engaged with that under d'Erlon, with whom was the intrusive king. The English general, therefore, with his usual prudence, retreated into the territories of Portugal, and Napoleon, seeing that his army in Spain amounted to

270,000 men, thought them more than sufficient to oppose what forces Spain could present, with the regular allied army of perhaps 70,000 at most, under Lord Wellington's command. He withdrew, accordingly, one hundred and fifty skeletons of battalions, which he meant to make the means of disciplining his young conscripts.

It was now that the hundred cohorts, or one hundred thousand youths of the First Ban of National Guards, who had been placed in frontier garrisons, under the declaration that they were not, under any pretence, to go beyond the limits of France, were converted into ordinary soldiers of the line, and destined to fill up the skeleton corps which were brought from Spain. Four regiments of guards, one of Polish cavalry, and one of gendarmes, were at the same time withdrawn from the Peninsula. The sailors of the French fleet, whose services were now indeed perfectly nominal, were landed, or brought rather from the harbours and maritime towns in which they loitered away their time, and formed into corps of artillery. This reinforcement might comprehend 40,000 men. But while his credit continued with the nation, the conscription was Napoleon's best and never-failing resource, and with the assistance of a decree of the Senate, it once more placed in his hands the anticipation of the year 1814.

This decree carried his levies of every kind to 350,000 men.

The remounting and recruiting of the cavalry was a matter of greater difficulty, and to that task was to be joined the restoration of the artillery and *matériel* of the army, all of which had been utterly destroyed in the late fatal retreat. But the vaults under the Tuileries were not yet exhausted, although they had contributed largely to the preparations for the campaign of the preceding year. A profusion of treasure was expended; every artizan, whose skill could be made use of, was set to work, horses were purchased or procured in every direction, and such was the active spirit of Napoleon, and the extent of his resources, that he was able to promise to the Legislative Representatives, that he would, without augmenting the national burdens, provide the sum of three hundred millions of francs, which were wanted to repair the losses of the Russian campaign.

We must not forget, that one of the ways and means of recruiting the cavalry, was a species of Conscription of a new invention, and which was calculated to sweep into the ranks of the army the youth of the higher ranks, whom the former draughts had spared, or who had redeemed themselves from the service by finding a substitute. Out of this class, hitherto exempted from the conscription,

Napoleon proposed to levy ten thousand youths of the higher ranks, to be formed into four regiments of Guards of Honour, who were to be regarded much as the troops of the royal household under the old system. This idea was encouraged among the courtiers and assentators, who represented the well-born and well-educated youths, as eager to exchange their fowling-pieces for muskets, their shooting-dresses for uniforms, and their rustic life for the toils of war. Politicians saw in it something of a deeper design than the mere adding ten thousand to the mass of recruits, and conceived that this corps of proprietors was proposed with the view of bringing into the Emperor's power a body of hostages, who should guarantee the fidelity of their fathers. The scheme, however, was interrupted, and for a time laid aside, owing to the jealousy of the Imperial Guard. These Prætorian Bands did not relish the introduction of such patrician corps as those proposed, whose privileges they conceived might interfere with their own; and accordingly the institution of the Guard of Honour was for some time suspended.

The wonderful energies of Napoleon's mind, and the influence which he could exert over the minds of others, were never so striking as at this period of his reign. He had returned to his seat of empire at a dreadful crisis, and in a most calamitous condition. His subjects

had been ignorant, for six weeks, whether he was dead or alive, and a formidable conspiracy, which was all but successful, had at once shown that there was an awakening activity amongst his secret enemies, an apathy and indifference amongst his apparent friends. When he arrived, it was to declare a dreadful catastrophe, of which his ambition had been the cause; the loss of five hundred thousand men, with all their arms, ammunition, and artillery; the death of so many children of France as threw the whole country into mourning. He had left behind him cold and involuntary allies, changing fast into foes, and foes, encouraged by his losses and his flight, threatening to combine Europe in one great crusade, having for its object the demolition of his power. No sovereign ever presented himself before his people in a situation more precarious, or overclouded by such calamities, arrived or in prospect.

Yet Napoleon came, and seemed but to stamp on the earth, and armed legions arose at his call; the doubts and discontents of the public disappeared as mist at sun-rising, and the same confidence which had attended his prosperous fortunes revived in its full extent, despite of his late reverses. In the month of April, his army was increased, as we have seen, by three hundred and fifty thousand men, in addition to the great garrisons maintained in

Dantzic, Thorn, Modlin, Zamosk, Czenstochau, Custrin, etc. augmented as they now were by the remains of the Grand Army, which had found refuge in these places of strength. He had, besides, an active levy of forces in Italy, and a very large army in Spain, notwithstanding all the draughts which his present necessity had made him bring out of that slaughter-house. Whether, therefore, it was Napoleon's purpose to propose peace or carry on war, he was at the head of a force little inferior to that which he had heretofore commanded.

Having thus given some account of the internal state of France, it is now necessary to look abroad, and examine the consequences of the Russian campaign upon Europe in general.

CHAPTER XVI.

Murat leaves the Grand Army abruptly—Eugène appointed in his place.—Measures taken by the King of Prussia for his disenthraldom—Arguments in his favour, opposed to those of the French Historians—He leaves Berlin for Breslau.—Treaty signed between Russia and Prussia early in March.—Alexander arrives at Breslau on 15th; on the 16th Prussia declares war against France.—Warlike Preparations of Prussia—Universal enthusiasm throughout all the land—Blucher appointed Generalissimo.—Vindication of the Crown Prince of Sweden for joining the Confederacy against France.—Proceedings of Austria.—Unabated spirit and pretensions of Napoleon.—A Regency is appointed in France during his absence, and Maria Louisa appointed Regent, with nominal powers.

The command of the relics of the Grand Army had been conferred upon Murat, when Napoleon left them at Smorgoni. It was of too painful and disagreeable a nature to afford any food to the ambition of the King of Naples; nor did he accept it as an adequate compensation for various mortifications which he had sustained during the campaign, and for which, as has already been noticed, he nourished

considerable resentment against his brother-in-law. Having, besides, more of the soldier than of the general, war lost its charms for him when he was not displaying his bravery at the head of his cavalry; and, to augment his impatience, he became jealous of the authority which his wife was exercising at Naples during his absence, and longed to return thither. He, therefore, hastily disposed of the troops in the various Prussian fortresses recently enumerated, where the French maintained garrisons, and suddenly left the army upon the 16th January. Napoleon, incensed at his conduct, announced his departure, and the substitution of Eugène, the Viceroy of Italy, in the general command of the army, with this note of censure:—« The Viceroy is more accustomed to the management of military affairs on a large scale, and besides, enjoys the full confidence of the Emperor.» This oblique sarcasm greatly increased the coldness betwixt the two brothers-in-law.

Meantime, the Russians continued to advance without opposition into Prussia, being desirous, by their presence, to bring that country to the decision which they had long expected. The manner in which Prussia had been treated by France; the extreme contributions which had been levied from her; the threats which had been held out of altogether annihilating her as a state; the occupation of her fortresses, and the depriving her of all the rights of inde-

pendence, constituted an abuse of the rights of conquest, exercised in consequence of superior force, which was sure to be ended so soon as that force ceased to be predominant. Napoleon, it is true, had the affectation to express confidence in the friendship of Prussia in his adversity, which he had never cultivated in prosperity. It would have been as reasonable in the patron of a Turkish cruizer, to expect his galley-slaves to continue, out of a point of honour, to pull the oars, after the chain was broken which fettered them to their benches.

Accordingly, King Frederick took his measures to shake himself free of the French yoke; but he did so with wisdom and moderation. Whatever wrongs the Prussians had sustained from the French, the King of Prussia had sought no means of avenging them, even when routed armies, falling back on his dominions in a defenceless condition, might have been destroyed, in their desolate state, by his peasantry alone. Popular violence, arising from the resentment of long-suffered injuries, did indeed practise cruelties on the French at Konigsberg and elsewhere; but it was against the will of the government, which suppressed them as much as possible. The king did not take any measures to intercept the retreat even of Napoleon himself, although there was ground to expect he might have come to that

resolution. He renewed the armistice concluded by d'Yorck; he suffered the distressed and frozen remains of the Grand Army to augment the hostile garrisons which had occupied his own strongest fortresses. He observed, in short, all the duties of an ally, though an unwilling one, until the war, in which he was engaged as an auxiliary, was totally ended, by the defeat and dispersion of the army of his principal. It is the more proper to enter at large into this topic, because the French historians usually mention the conduct of the King of Prussia on this occasion as defection, desertion, or some such word, indicating a breach of faith. Nothing can be more unjust.

It was not, surely, to be expected, that Frederick was to submit his own dominions to the devastation of the Russians, by continuing a war in which his share was only secondary; nor was it rational to believe, that a country so much oppressed would neglect the means of emancipation which now presented themselves. It is, therefore, no marvel that Prussia should have taken this favourable opportunity for throwing off a yoke which she had found so oppressive. Nay, it is believed, on good grounds, that the course adopted by the King of Prussia was not only that of wisdom and patriotism, but even of necessity; for it is very probable, that, if he had refused to lead

his subjects against the French, they might, in that moment of excitation, have found some one else to have placed at the head of the government. He had, as we have already said, denounced the convention entered into by d'Yorck and Massenbach, and ordered them both to Berlin for the purpose of undergoing trial. But the generals had remained quietly in command of their troops, affording a strong example, that, had Frederick laboured ever so much for that purpose, it would have been vain, if not hazardous, to have opposed his royal authority to the impulse of the national spirit.

Before the king took his final resolution, he resolved, as a measure of prudence, to secure his own person, lest, like Ferdinand and the Spanish Bourbons, he should be seized upon as a hostage. He therefore suddenly left Berlin on 22d January, 1813, and betook himself to Breslau, where there were no French soldiery. Immediately afterwards he published an address to his people, calling his armies together, and giving the signal to the patriotism of thousands who longed to arise in arms. The French ambassador was, nevertheless, invited to follow the King to Breslau, where a variety of discussions immediately took place betwixt him and the Prussian cabinet.

To the complaints of exactions and oppressions of every kind, the French negotiators

would only reply by reminding the Prussians, that Napoleon had, after decisive victory, suffered the nation to retain the name of independence, and the king to wear a precarious crown. A robber would have the same defence against restoring the booty he had acquired from a traveller, if he stated, that though he had despoiled, he had not murdered him. It was by the right of the strongest that France had acquired that influence over Prussia which she exercised so severely; and, according to the dictates of common sense and human nature, when the advantage was on Prussia's side, she had a right to regain by strength what she had lost by weakness. Every obligation, according to the maxim of the Civil Law, is made void in the same manner in which it is rendered binding; as Arthegal, the emblematic champion of Justice, in Spenser's Allegory, decrees as law, that what the sea has brought the sea may resume.

On the 1st of March, or about that period, Prussia, returning to a system which nothing but the extremity of her circumstances had ever interrupted, signed a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, with Russia. On the 15th March, the Emperor Alexander arrived at Breslau. The meeting was affecting betwixt the two sovereigns, who had been such intimate friends, and had always retained the same personal attachment for each other, al-

though the circumstances of controlling necessity had made them enemies, at a period when it was of importance to Russia to have as few foes as possible, thrown into the scale against her. The King of Prussia wept. « Courage, my brother,» said Alexander; « these are the last tears which Napoleon shall cause you to shed.»

On the 16th March, Prussia declared war against France. There is, in the paper containing this denunciation, much reasoning respecting the extent of contributions due and received, which might have been summed up in the declaration, that « France had made Prussia her subject and her slave, but that now Prussia was enabled to act for herself, and shake off the fetters which violence had imposed on her.» This real note was touched, where the manifesto declares, that, « Abandoned to herself, and hopeless of receiving any effectual succour from an ally who had declined to render her even the demands of justice, Prussia must take counsel of herself, in order to raise anew and support her existence as a nation. It was in the love and courage of his people that the king sought means to extricate himself, and to restore to his monarchy the independence which is necessary to insure the future prosperity of the kingdom.»

The Emperor Napoleon received that declaration of war, with the calmness of one by

whom it had been for some time expected. « It was better,» he said, « to have a declared enemy than a doubtful ally.» By the Prussians at large it was heard with all the rapture of gratified hope, and the sacrifices which they made, not willingly only, but eagerly, show more completely than any thing else can, the general hatred against France, and the feelings which that nation had excited during her career of success.

From a country so trampled down and exhausted as Prussia, it might have been thought slender means of warfare could be provided. But vengeance is like the teeth of the dragon, a seed which, wheresoever sown, produces a crop of warriors. Freedom, too, was at stake; and when a nation is warring for its own rights, who shall place a limit to its exertions? Some preparation had been made by the monarch. The jealousy of France had limited the exercise of the Prussian militia to twenty-five thousand men yearly. But the government had contrived to double this amount, by calling out the militia twice in the year, and training on the second occasion the same number, but different individuals, from those who had been first summoned. Thus, a certain portion of discipline had become general among the Prussian youth, and, incited by the desire of their country's freedom, they rushed to battle against France as to a holy warfare. The means

of providing artillery had also been sedulously augmented. This was not to be a war of posts or fortresses, but of fields of battle and of bayonets. Many, therefore, of the brass pieces of ordnance, which garnished the walls of such towns and fortresses as were yet unoccupied by the French, had been recast, and converted into field-pieces. Money was scarce, but England was liberal; and besides, the Prussian nobles and burgesses taxed themselves to the uttermost. Even the ladies gave up their diamonds and gold ornaments, for chains and bracelets beautifully wrought out of iron, the state enjoying the advantage of the exchange. In a future age, these relics, when found in the female casket, will be more valuable than the richest Indian jewels.

Meanwhile the resentment and desire of revenge, which had so long smouldered in the bosoms of the Prussians, broke forth with the force of a volcano. The youth of every description rushed to fill the ranks, the distinctions of birth were forgotten, nay, in a great measure abolished; no question was asked at the Prussian, but whether he was able and willing to assist in the liberation of his country. The students, the cultivation of whose minds generally adds to their feeling for national freedom and national honour, arrayed themselves into battalions and squadrons. Some formed the Black Bands, who at this time dis-

tinguished themselves; others assumed the arms and dress of the Cossacks, whose name had become so terrible to the French. In general, these volunteers were formed into mounted and dismounted squadrons of chasseurs, whose appearance differed from that of the line only in their uniform being dark green, instead of blue. Their discipline, formed on a system devised by Scharnhorst, was admirably calculated to give fresh levies the degree of training and discipline necessary to render them serviceable, without pretending to give them the accuracy in details which experience alone can teach.

In a few weeks numerous armies were on foot, and Prussia, like a strong man rousing himself from slumber, stepped forward to assume her rank among independent nations. There could not be a greater contrast than between the same nation in her hour of presumption, her period of depression, and her present form of regeneration. To the battle of Jena the Prussians had marched as to an assured conquest, with a splendid army, well disposed, and admirably appointed, but conducted with that negligence which is inspired by a presumptuous degree of confidence, and that pride which goes before destruction. In the campaign of 1812, the Black Eagles stooping their dishonoured crests beneath those of France, they went, a discouraged and reluc-

tant band of auxiliaries, to assist in the destruction of that power, whose subjugation they were well aware must lead to their own irretrievable bondage. And now, such was the change of a few weeks, nay, not many days, that Prussia again entered the list with an army, still deficient in its material provisions, but composed of soldiers whose hearts were in the trim, whom misfortunes had taught caution, and oppression had roused to resistance; who knew by melancholy experience the strength of their powerful adversary, but were not the less disposed to trust in their own good swords and good cause.

A leader was selected, admirably formed by nature to command a national army at such a crisis. This was the celebrated Blucher, one of the few Prussian generals, who, even after the battle of Jena, continued to maintain the fame of the Great Frederick, under whom he had been trained, and to fight until every ray of hope had been entirely destroyed. This high-spirited and patriotic officer had remained in obscurity during the long period of the French domination. He was one of those ardent and inflexible characters that were dreaded by Napoleon, whose generosity, however it might display itself otherwise, was seldom observed to forgive those who had shown a steady and conscientious opposition to his power. Such men he held his enemies in every sense, personal as well as political; and, watched closely

by the police, their safety could only be insured by living strictly retired. But now the old warrior sprang eagerly from his obscure retreat, as in the ancient Roman shows a lion might have leaped from his dark den into the arena of the crowded amphitheatre, on which he was soon to act his terrible part. Blucher was, indeed, by character and disposition, the very man whom the exigence and the Prussian nation required to support a national war. He was not possessed of war as a science, nor skilled in planning out the objects of a campaign. Scharnhorst, and after him Gneisnau, were intrusted with that part of the general's duty, as being completely acquainted with stratégie; but, in the field of battle, no man possessed the confidence of his soldiers so completely as General Blucher. The first to advance, the last to retreat, he was seldom too much elated by victory, and never depressed by bad success. Defeated to-day, he was as ready to renew the battle to-morrow. In his army was no instance of whole divisions throwing down their arms, because they conceived their line broken or their flank turned. It was his system, that the greater part of fighting consists in taking and giving hard blows, and on all occasions he presented himself with a good grace to the bloody exercise. He was vigilant, too, as taught by the exercise of his youth in the light cavalry; and

so enterprising and active, that Napoleon was heard to complain with his accustomed sneer, that « he had more trouble from that old dissipated hussar, than from all the generals of the allies beside.» Deeply resenting the injuries of his country, and his own exile, Blucher's whole soul was in the war against France and her Ruler; and, utterly devoid of the milder feelings of modern military leaders, he entered into hostilities with the embittered and personal animosity which Hannibal entertained of old against the Roman name and nation.[1] Such were the character and energies of the veteran to whom Prussia now confided the defence of her dearest rights, the leading of her youth, and the care of her freedom.

Sweden, or, we ought rather to say, the Crown Prince, had joined the confederacy, as already mentioned, and the spleen of Buonaparte, personal as well as public, had been directed even more against him than against the King of Prussia. The latter was represented as a rebellious and ungrateful vassal, the first as a refugee Frenchman who had renounced his country.

The last accusation, so grossly urged, was,

[1] Sworn from his cradle Rome's relentless foe,
Such generous hate the Punic champion bore;
Thy lake, O Thrasymene, beheld it glow,
And Cannæ's walls and Trebia's crimson'd shore.
SHENSTONE.

if possible, more unreasonably unjust than the first. The ties of our native country, strict and intimate as they are, may be dissolved in more ways than one. Its lawful government may be overthrown, and the faithful subjects of that government, exiled to foreign countries for their adherence to it, may lawfully bear arms, which, in that case, are not directed against the home of their fathers, but against the band of thieves and robbers by which it is temporarily occupied. If this is not the case, what are we to think of the Revolution of 1688, and the invasion of King William? In like manner, it is possible for a native of France or Britain so to link himself with another country, as to transfer to it the devotion which, in the general case, is only due to the land of his birth. In becoming the heir of the Crown of Sweden, Bernadotte had become in fact a Swede; for no one, circumstanced as he was, is entitled, in interweaving his personal fortunes with the fate of the nation which adopts him, to make a reserve of any case in which he can be called to desert their interest for that of another country, though originally his own.

In assuming a French general for their Crown Prince, Sweden no doubt intended to give a pledge that she meant to remain on terms of amity with France; but it would be a wide step to argue from thence that it was her

purpose to subject herself as a conquered province to that empire, and to hold the prince whom she had chosen to be no better than the lieutenant of Napoleon. This was indeed the construction which the French Emperor put upon the kingdoms of his own creation—Holland, Westphalia, Spain, and so forth. But in these countries the crowns were at least of his conferring. That of Sweden, on the other hand, was given by the Diet at Orebro, representing the Swedish people, to a person of their own election; nor had Buonaparte any thing to do in it farther, than by consenting that a French subject should become King of Sweden; which consent, if available for any thing, must be certainly held as releasing Bernadotte from every engagement to France, inconsistent with the duties of a sovereign to an independent kingdom.

When, therefore, at a period only a few months afterwards, Napoleon authorized piracies upon the Swedish commerce, and seized, with armed hand, upon the only portion of the Swedish territories which lay within his grasp, nothing could be more unreasonable than to require, that because the Crown Prince was born in Bearn, he should therefore submit to have war made upon him in his capacity of King of Sweden, without making all the resistance in his power. Sup-

posing, what might easily have chanced, that Corsica had remained a constituent part of the British dominions, it would have been ridiculous to have considered Napoleon, when at the head of the French government, as bound by the duties of a liege subject of George III. simply because he was born at Ajaccio. Yet there is no difference betwixt the cases, excepting in the relative size and importance of France and Corsica; a circumstance which can have no influence upon the nature of the obligations incurred by those who are born in the two countries.

It may be readily granted, that a person in the situation of the Crown Prince must suffer as a man of feeling, when opposed to the ranks of his own countrymen. So must a judge, if unhappily called upon to sit in judgment and pronounce sentence upon a brother, or other near relation. In both cases, public duty must take place of private or personal sentiment.

While the powers of the North formed this coalition, upon terms better concerted, and with forces of a different character from those which had existed upon former less fortunate occasions, Austria looked upon the approaching strife with a hesitating and doubtful eye. Her regard for a sovereign allied to her royal family by so close a tie as Napoleon, had not prevented her cabinet

from feeling alarm at the overgrown power of France, and the ambition of her ruler. She had reluctantly contributed an auxiliary force to the assistance of France in the last campaign, and had taken the posture of a neutral so soon as circumstances permitted. The restoration of independence to the world must restore to Austria the provinces which she had lost, especially Illyria and the Tyrol, and at the same time her influence both in Italy and Germany. But this might be obtained from Napoleon disabled, and willing to purchase his ransom from the reprisals of allied Europe, by surrender of his pretensions to universal monarchy; and Austria therefore concluded it best to assume the office of mediator betwixt France and the allies, reserving to herself to throw her sword into the scales, in case the forces and ambition of Napoleon should again predominate; while, on the other hand, should peace be restored by a treaty formed under her auspices, she would at once protect the son-in-law of her Emperor, regain her lost provinces and decayed influence, and contribute, by destroying the arrogant pretensions of France, to the return of tranquillity to Europe.

Otto, the French minister at Vienna, could already see in the Austrian administration a disposition to revive the ancient claims which had been annulled by the victories of Napo-

leon, and wrote to his court, even in the beginning of January, that they were already making a merit of not instantly declaring war against France. A mission of General Bubna to Paris put a more favourable character upon the interference of the Austrian ministers. He informed the French cabinet that the Emperor Francis was about to treat with France as a good ally, providing Austria was permitted also to treat with others as an independent nation.

It was in short the object of Austria, besides recovering her own losses (of which that cabinet, constantly tenacious of its objects, as it is well known to be, had never lost sight), to restore, as far as possible, some equilibrium of power, by which the other states, of which the European republic was composed, might become, as formerly, guarantees for the freedom and independence of each other. Such was not the system of Napoleon. He would gladly gratify any state who assisted him in hostilities against, and the destruction of, another, with a handsome share of the spoil; but it was contrary to his policy to allow any one a protecting veto in behalf of a neutral power. It was according to his system, in the present case, to open to Austria his determination to destroy Prussia entirely, and to assure her of Silesia as her share of the booty, if she would be his ally in the war. But he found, to his

surprise, that Austria had adopted a different idea of policy, and that she rather saw her interest in supporting the weak against the strong, than, while grasping at selfish objects, in winking at the engrossing ambition of the ruler of France. Neither did he leave the Austrian cabinet long in the belief, that his losses had in any degree lowered his lofty pretensions, or induced him to descend from the high claims which he had formed of universal sovereignty. From his declarations to the Senate and Representative Body of France, one of two things was plain; either that no sense of past misfortunes, or fear of those which might arrive, would be of any avail to induce him to abandon the most unjustifiable of his usurpations, the most unreasonable of his pretensions; or else that he was determined to have his armed force re-established, and his sword once more in his hand; nay, that he had settled that a victory or two should wash out the memory of his retreat from Moscow, before he would enter into any treaty of pacification.

The notes in the *Moniteur*, during this winter of 1812-13, which were always written by himself, contained Buonaparte's bold defiance to Europe, and avowed his intention to maintain, abreast of each other, the two wars of Spain and Germany. He proposed at once to open the campaign in Germany (though he

had lost the alliance both of Prussia and Austria), with an army of double the amount of that which marched against Russia, and to reinforce and keep up the armies of Spain at their complete establishment of 300,000 men. « If any one desired,» he said, « the price at which he was willing to grant peace, it had been expressed in the Duke of Bassano's letter to Lord Castlereagh, before commencement of the campaign of 1812.»

When that document is referred to, it will be found to contain no cession whatever on the part of France, but a proposal that England should yield up Spain (now almost liberated) to his brother Joseph, with the admission that Portugal and Sicily, none of which kingdoms Napoleon had the means of making a serious impression upon, might remain to their legitimate sovereigns. In other words, he would desist from pretensions which he had no means to make good, on condition that every point, which was yet doubtful, should be conceded in his favour.

It was extravagant to suppose that Britain, after the destruction occasioned by the Russian retreat, would accept terms which were refused when Napoleon was at the head of his fine army, and in the full hope of conquests. When, therefore, Austria offered herself as a mediator at the court of St James's, the English ministers contented themselves with pointing

out the extravagant pretensions expressed by France, in documents understood to be authentic, and demanding that these should be disavowed, and some concessions made or promised by Napoleon, ere they would hamper themselves by any approach to a treaty.

Upon the whole, it was clear, that the fate of the world was once more committed to the chance of war, and that probably much more human blood must be spilled, ere any principles could be settled, on which a general pacification might be grounded.

A step of state policy was adopted by Napoleon, obviously to conciliate his father-in-law, the Austrian Emperor. A Regency was established during his absence, and the Empress, Maria Louisa, was named Regent. But her authority was curtailed of all real or effectual power; for he reserved to himself exclusively the privilege of presenting all decrees to be passed by the Senate, and the Empress had only the right to preside in that body.

CHAPTER XVII.

State of the French Grand Army.—The Russians advance, and show themselves on the Elbe, joined everywhere by the Inhabitants.—The French evacuate Berlin, and retreat on the Elbe.—The Crown Prince of Sweden joins the Allies, with 35,000 men.—Dresden is occupied by the Sovereigns of Russia and Prussia.—Marshal Bessières killed on 1st May—Battle of Lutzen fought on the 2d.—The Allies lose 20,000 men in killed and wounded, and the French keep the field, after very dreadful loss.—The Allies retire to Bautzen.—Hamburgh taken possession of by the Danes and French.—Battle of Bautzen fought on the 20th and 21st May, with great loss on both sides, the French remaining masters of the field.—The Allies retire in good order.—The French Generals, Bruyères and Duroc, killed on the 22d—Grief of Napoleon for the Death of the latter.—An Armistice signed on 4th June.

We must once more look out upon Germany, to which country, so long the scene on which were fought the quarrels of Europe, the success of the Russians, and the total discomfiture of the army of Napoleon, had again removed the war. We left the wrecks of the Grand Army thronging in upon the fortresses held by

their countrymen in Prussia, where they were deposited as follows:—

Into Thorn were thrown by Murat, before he left the Grand Army........................	6,000 men.
Into Modlin..........................	8,000
Into Zamosc..	4,000
Into Graudentz, Prussians...............	6,000
Into Dantzic...	30,000
	54,000

This total of fifty-four thousand men comprehended the sole remaining part of what Napoleon continued to call the Grand Army of Russia; in which country, however, not one-third of them had ever been, having been employed in Lithuania or Volhynia, and having thus escaped the horrors of the retreat. Almost all these troops were sickly, some distressingly so. The garrison towns were, however, filled with them, and put in a state of defence judged sufficient to have checked the advance of the Russians.

It would, in all probability, have done so upon any occasion of ordinary war; for Russia having not only gained back Lithuania, but taken possession of Warsaw, and that part of Poland which formerly belonged to Prussia, ought not, in a common case, to have endangered her success by advancing beyond the Vistula, or by plunging her armies into Silesia, leaving so many fortresses in the rear. But

the condition of Prussia, waiting the arrival of the Russians as a signal for rising at once, and by her example encouraging the general insurrection of Germany, was a temptation too powerful to be resisted, although unquestionably there was a risk incurred in giving way to it. The various fortresses were therefore masked with a certain number of troops; and the Russian light corps advancing beyond the line even of the Oder, began to show themselves on the Elbe, joined everywhere by the inhabitants of the country, who, influenced by the doctrines of the Tugend-Bund, and fired with detestation of the French, took arms wherever their deliverers appeared. The French everywhere retired, and Prince Eugène, evacuating Berlin, retreated upon the Elbe. It seemed as if the allies had come armed with lighted matches, and the ground had been strewed with gunpowder; so readily did the Germans rise in arms at the Hourra of a body of Cossacks, or even at the distant gleam of their lances. The purpose of the war was not, however, to procure partial and desultory risings, from which no permanent benefit could be expected; but to prepare the means of occupying the north of Germany by an army conducted by one of the most celebrated generals of the age, and possessed of regular strength, sufficient to secure what ad-

vantages might be gained, and thus influence the final decision of the eventful campaign.

While the light troops of Russia and Prussia overran Germany, at least the western and northern provinces, the King of Sweden, in virtue of the convention into which he had entered at Abo, crossed over to Stralsund in the month of May, 1813, with a contingent amounting to 35,000 men, and anxiously awaited the junction which was to have placed under his command such corps of Russians and Germans as should increase his main body to 80,000 or 100,000. With such a force, the Crown Prince proposed to undertake the offensive, and thus to compel Napoleon, when he should take the field, to make head at once against this force upon his left flank, and defend himself in front against the advancing armies of Russia and Prussia. The proclamations of independence sent abroad by the allies made them friends wherever they came; and three flying corps, under Czernicheff, Tettenborn, and Winzengerode, spread along both sides of the Elbe. The French retreated everywhere, to concentrate themselves under the walls of Magdeburg, and other fortified places, of which they still held possession. Meantime, Hamburgh, Lubech, and other towns, declared for the allies, and received their troops with an alacrity, which, in the case of Hamburgh, was severely punished by subsequent events.

The French general, Morand, endeavoured to put a stop to the stream of what was termed defection, and occupied Luneberg, which had declared for the allies, with nearly four thousand men. His troops were already in the place, and about to proceed, it was said, to establish military tribunals, and punish the political crimes of the citizens, when the Russians, commanded by the active Czernicheff, suddenly appeared, forced their way sword in hand into the town, and on 2d April, 1813, killed or took prisoners the whole of Morand's corps. The Viceroy Eugène attempted to impose some bounds on the audacity now manifested by the allies, by striking a bold blow upon his side. He marched suddenly from the neighbourhood of Magdeburg, with a view of surprising Berlin; but was himself surprised at Mochern, driven back, defeated, and obliged to shut himself up in Magdeburg, where he was blockaded.

The predominance of the allies in the north of Germany seemed now so effectually ascertained, that the warmest adherents of France appeared disposed to desert her cause. Denmark began to treat with the allies, and even on one occasion, as will be hereafter noticed, made a demonstration to join them in arms.

The King of Saxony, who had been always Napoleon's most sincere friend, dared not now abide the storm. He retreated to a place of

security in Franconia, while his army separated themselves from the French, and, throwing themselves into Torgau, began to stipulate for a neutrality, which would probably have terminated, like that of d'Yorck, in their actually joining the allies.

Davoust retreated to the northwards, after blowing up the fine bridge at Dresden, amid the tumultuary opposition and execration of the inhabitants. Dresden itself soon after became the head-quarters of the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia, who were received with joyful acclamations by all classes of the citizens.

In like manner, three of the fortresses held by the French in Prussia—Thorn, Spandau, and Czenstochau—surrendered to the allies, and afforded hope that the French might be dislodged from the rest in the course of the summer. But the farther results of the activity of the allied generals were in a great measure prevented, or postponed, by the arrival of the numerous forces which Napoleon had so speedily levied to restore his late losses.

It would be severe to give the name of rashness to the conduct of the allies, in this bold advance into the middle and north of Germany. A great part of their power was of a moral character, and consisted in acting upon the feelings of the Germans, who were

enchanted with the prospect of freedom and independence. Still there was much audacity in the allied monarchs venturing across the Elbe, and subjecting themselves to the encounter of Napoleon and his numerous levies, before their own resources had been brought forward. It was now, however, no time to dispute which plan ought to have been preferred; the sovereigns of Russia and Prussia had no other alternative than to follow out boldly that from which they could not now retreat.

Eugène, at the approach of the new French levies through the passes of the Thuringian mountains, removed from Magdeburg, and formed a junction with them on the Saale. The force in total might amount to 115,000 present in the field; the greater part, however, were new levies, and many almost mere boys. The allied army was collected towards Leipsic, and lay full in Napoleon's road to that city, and from thence to Dresden, which was the point on which he advanced.

It has been thought that the plains of Lutzen would have been the most advantageous field of battle for the allies, whose strength lay in their fine body of cavalry; to which it has been replied, that they expected to encounter Buonaparte on the other side of the Saale, and there to have obtained open ground for their cavalry, and a field fitting for their vengeance in the plains of Jena. But though

the activity of the allies had of late been sufficient to distress Napoleon's lieutenants, it was not as yet adequate to match that of the Emperor himself.

An important change had lately taken place in their army, by the death of the veteran Kutousof, in whose place Witgenstein had succeeded to the supreme command.

Skirmishes took place at Weissenfels and Poserna, upon 29th April and 1st May, on which last day an event occurred distressing to Buonaparte's feelings. A contest took place in the defile of Rippach, near Poserna, which was only remarkable for the death of an excellent officer. Marshal Bessières, whose name the reader must remember as the leader of Napoleon's household troops, from the time they bore the humble name of Guides, until now that they were the Imperial Guard, and he their colonel-general, coming up to see how the action went, was killed by a cannon-shot. His body was covered with a white sheet, and the loss concealed as long as possible from the Guards, who were much attached to him. Upon a former occasion, when his horse was killed, Buonaparte told him he was obliged to the bullet, for making it known to him how much he was beloved, since the whole Guard had wept for him. His time was, however, now come. He was sincerely lamented by Napoleon, who was thus, when the world was

going harder against him than formerly, deprived of an early and attached follower.

But the war kept its pace. The French army continued to advance upon Leipsic on the south; the allies approached from the north to defend the place.

The centre of the French army was stationed at a village called Kaya. It was under the command of Ney. He was sustained by the Imperial Guard, with its fine artillery, drawn up before the well-known town of Lutzen, which, having seen the last conflict of Gustavus Adolphus, was now to witness a more bloody tragedy. Marmont, who commanded the right, extended as far as the defile of Poserna, and rested with his left upon the centre. The left wing of the French reached from Kaya to the Elster. As they did not expect to be brought to action in that place, or upon that day (May 2d), Napoleon was pressing forward from his right, Lauriston being at the head of the column, with the purpose of possessing himself of Leipsic, behind which he expected to see the army of the allies.

But these, encouraged by the presence of the Emperor Alexander and King of Prussia, had formed the daring resolution of marching southward along the left bank of the Elster during the night, transporting themselves to the right bank in the morning, and assaulting, with the choicest of their troops, under Blu-

cher, the centre of the French, led by Ney. The fury of the attack was irresistible, and, in despite of a most obstinate defence, the allies obtained possession of Kaya, the point on which the centre of the French army rested. This was a crisis worthy of Napoleon's genius, and he was not wanting to himself. Assailed on the flank when in the act of advancing in column, he yet contrived, by a masterly movement, to wheel up his two wings, so as in turn to out-flank those of the enemy. He hurried in person to bring up his Guard to support the centre, which was in fact nearly broken through. The combat was the more desperate and deplorable, that, on the one side, fought the flower of the Prussian youth, which had left their universities to support the cause of national honour and freedom; and, on the other, the young men of Paris, many of them of the best rank, who bravely endeavoured to sustain their country's long pre-eminent claim to victory. Both combated under the eyes of their respective sovereigns, maintained the honour of their country, and paid an ample tribute to the carnage of the day.

The battle lasted for several hours, before it could be judged whether the allies would carry their point by breaking through the French centre, or whether the French, before sustaining that calamity, would be able to wheel their Napts upon the flanks of the allies. At length

the last event began to be anticipated as the most probable. The distant discharge of musketry was seen on right and left closing inwards on the central tumult, and recognized for the fire of Macdonald and Bertrand, who commanded the French wings. At the same time the Emperor made a successful struggle to recover the village of Kaya, and the allies, extricating themselves skilfully from the combat, led back their exhausted forces from between the forceps, as we may term it, formed by the closing wings of Napoleon, without further loss than the carnage sustained in the field of battle. But that was immense. The allies lost twenty thousand men in killed and wounded. Among these was Scharnhorst, one of the best staff-officers in Europe, and who had organized with such ability the Prussian landwehr and volunteers. The Prince Leopold of Hesse Homberg, and the Prince of Mecklenberg-Strelitz, nearly allied to the royal family of England, were also killed. The veteran Blucher was wounded, but, refusing to retire, had his wounds dressed upon the field of battle. Seven or eight French generals were also slain or wounded, and the loss of the French army was very severe.

Two circumstances greatly assisted to decide the fate of the action. General Bertrand, who was not come up when it began, arrived in time to act upon the left of the allies, and

to permit Marmont, whose place he occupied, to unite himself, in the hour of need, to the defence of the centre. On the part of the allies, on the contrary, the division of Miloradovitch, from some mistake or want of orders, never came into action. Few prisoners, and no artillery, were taken. The allies moved off in safety, protected by their fine cavalry, and the sole trophy of the victors was the possession of the bloody field.

But Napoleon had need of renown to animate his drooping partisans; and accordingly the battle was scarce ended ere the most exaggerated reports of the Emperor's success were dispatched to every friendly court, and even so far as Constantinople. The very best of Napoleon's rhetorical ornaments were exhausted on this occasion. The battle of Lutzen was described as having, like a clap of thunder, pulverized all the schemes of the allies; and the cloudy train of intrigues, formed by the cabinet of St James's, as having been destroyed, like the Gordian knot under the sword of Alexander. The eloquence of Cardinal Maury, who said *Te Deum* on the occasion at Paris, was equally florid; until at length his wonder was raised so high, as scarce to admit that the hero who surmounted so many difficulties, performed so many duties, united so much activity to so much foresight, such brilliancy of conception to such accuracy of

detail, was only, after all, a mortal like himself and the congregation.

The battle of Lutzen had indeed results of importance,* though inferior by far to those on which such high colouring was bestowed by the court chaplain and the bulletins. The allied monarchs fell back upon the Mulda, and all hope of engaging Saxony in the general cause was necessarily adjourned. The French troops were again admitted into Torgau by the positive order of their sovereign, notwithstanding the opposition of the Saxon general, Thielmann. The King of Saxony returned from Prague, his last place of refuge, and came to Dresden on the 12th. Napoleon made a military fête to receive the good old monarch, and conducted him in a kind of triumph through his beautiful capital. It could afford little pleasure at present to the paternal heart of Frederick Augustus; for while that part of Dresden which was on the left side of the Elbe was held by the French, the other was scarcely evacuated by the allies; and the bridge of boats, burnt to the water's edge, was still the subject of contest betwixt the parties—the French seeking to repair, the allies to destroy it.

Another consequence of the battle of Lutzen was, that the allies could no longer maintain themselves on the Elbe. The main army, however, only retired to Bautzen, a town near

the sources of the Spree, about twelve French leagues from Dresden, where they selected a strong position. An army of observation, under Bulow, was destined to cover Berlin, should the enemy make any attempt in that direction; and they were thus in a situation equally convenient for receiving reinforcements, or retiring upon Silesia, in case of being attacked ere such succours came up. They also took measures for concentrating their army, by calling in their advanced corps in all directions.

One of the most unpleasant consequences was, their being obliged upon the whole line to withdraw to the right side of the Elbe. Czernicheff and Tettenborn, whose appearance had occasioned Hamburgh, and other towns in that direction, to declare themselves for the good cause, and levy men in behalf of the allies, were now under the necessity of abandoning them to the vengeance of the French, who were certain to treat them as revolted subjects. The fate of Hamburgh in particular, in itself a town so interesting, and which had distinguished itself by the number and spirit of the volunteers which were raised there in the cause of the allies, was peculiarly tantalizing.

No sooner were the main body of the allies withdrawn on the 9th May, than the place was fiercely attacked by Davoust at the head of 5000 or 6000 men, uttering denunciations

of vengeance against the city for the part it had taken. When this force, which they possessed no adequate means of repelling, was in the act of approaching to storm the place, the alarmed citizens of Hamburgh, to their own wonder, were supported by Danish artillery and gun-boats, sent from Altona to protect the city. This kindness had not been expected at the hand of the Danes, who had as yet been understood to be the allies of France. But the reality was, that as the Danish treaty with the allies was still in dependence, it was thought that this voluntary espousal of the cause of their neighbour might have a good effect upon the negotiation. Something perhaps might arise from the personal zeal of Blucher, the commandant of Altona, who was a relation of the celebrated Prussian general. The Danes, however, after this show of friendship, evacuated Hamburgh on the evening of the 12th of May, to return shortly after in a very different character; for it being in the interval ascertained that the allies were determined to insist upon Denmark's ceding Norway to Sweden, and the news of the battle of Lutzen seeming to show that Napoleon's star was becoming again preeminent, the Danish prince broke off his negotiation with the allies, and returned to his league, offensive and defensive, with France.

The hopes and fears of the citizens of Hamburgh were doomed to be yet further tantalized.

The Crown Prince of Sweden was at Stralsund with a considerable army, and 3000 Swedes next appeared for the purpose of protecting Hamburgh. But as this Swedish army, as already mentioned, was intended to be augmented to the number of 90,000, by reinforcements of Russians and Prussians which had not yet appeared, and which the Crown Prince was soliciting with the utmost anxiety, he could not divide his forces without risking the grand objects for which this large force was to be collected, and the additional chance of his Swedish army, of whose blood he was justly and wisely frugal, being destroyed in detail. We may add to this, that from a letter addressed by the Crown Prince to Alexander, at this very period, it appears he was agitated with the greatest doubt and anxiety concerning the arrival of these important reinforcements, and justly apprehensive for the probable consequences of their being delayed. At such a crisis, therefore, he was in no condition to throw any part of his forces into Hamburgh as a permanent garrison.

The reasons urged for withdrawing the Swedish troops seem sufficient, but the condition of the citizens of Hamburgh was not the less hard, alternately deserted by Russians, Danes, and Swedes. On the 30th of May, 5000 Danes, now the allies of France, and 1500 French troops, took possession of the town,

in the name of Napoleon. They kept good discipline, and only plundered after the fashion of regular exactions; but this occupation was the prelude to a train of distresses, to which Hamburgh was subjected during the whole continuance of the war. Meanwhile, though this forlorn city was lost for the time, the war continued in its neighbourhood.

The gallant Czernicheff, as if to avenge himself for the compulsory retreat of his Cossacks from Hamburgh, contrived, near Haberstadt, to cut off a body of French infantry, forming a hollow square of musketry, and having fourteen field-pieces. It was seen on this occasion, that these sons of the desert were something very different from miserable hordes, as they were termed in the language with which the French writers, and Napoleon himself, indulged their spleen. At one shrill whoop of their commander, they dispersed themselves much in the manner of a fan when thrown open; at another signal, each horseman, acting for himself, came on at full gallop. Thus they escaped in a considerable degree the fire of the enemy, which could not be pointed against any mass, penetrated the square, took the cannon, made prisoners near 1000 men, and piked or sabred more than seven hundred, not a Frenchman escaping from the field of battle. This skirmish was so successfully managed on Czernicheff's part, that a French force, much superior to his

own, came up in time to see the execution done, but not to render assistance to their countrymen.

In the mean while Dresden was the scene of political negotiations, and its neighbourhood resounded with the din of war. Count Bubna, on the part of the Austrian Emperor, made the strongest remonstrances to Buonaparte on the subject of a general peace, while it seems probable that Napoleon endeavoured to dazzle the cabinet of Vienna with such views of individual advantage, as to make her declare without scruple for his side. The audiences of Count Bubna were prolonged till long past midnight, and matters of the last importance seemed to be under discussion.

The war was for a few days confined to skirmishes of doubtful and alternate success, maintained on the right bank of the Danube. On the 12th May, Ney crossed the river near Torgau, and menaced the Prussian territories, directing himself on Spremberg and Hoyerswerder, as if threatening Berlin, which was only protected by Bulow and his army of observation. The purpose was probably, by exciting an alarm for the Prussian capital, to induce the allies to leave their strong position at Bautzen. But they remained stationary there, so that Napoleon moved forward to dislodge them in person. On the 18th May he quitted Dresden. In his road towards Bautzen,

he passed the ruins of the beautiful little town of Bischoffswerder, and expressed particular sympathy upon finding it had been burnt by the French soldiery, after a rencounter near the spot with a body of Russians. He declared that he would rebuild the place, and actually presented the inhabitants with 100,000 francs towards repairing their losses. On other occasions, riding where the recently wounded had not been yet removed, he expressed, as indeed was his custom, for he could never view bodily pain without sympathy, a very considerable degree of sensibility.

« His wound is incurable, Sire, » said a surgeon, upon whom he was laying his orders to attend to one of these miserable objects.

« Try, however, » said Napoleon; and added, in a suppressed voice, — « There will always be one fewer of them, » — meaning, doubtless, of the victims of his wars.

Napoleon's is not the only instance in which men have trembled or wept, at looking upon the details of misery which have followed in consequence of some abstract resolutions of their own.

Arriving at Bautzen on the 21st, the Emperor in person reconnoitred the formidable position of the allies. They were formed to the rear of the town of Bautzen, which was too much advanced to make a part of their position, and had the Spree in their front. Their right

wing rested on fortified eminences, their left upon wooded hills. On their right, towards Hoyerswerder, they were watched by Ney and Lauriston, who, of course, were prepared to act in communication with Napoleon. But the allies disconcerted this part of the Emperor's scheme with singular address and boldness. They surprised, by a movement from their right, a column of 7,000 Italians, and so entirely routed them, that those who escaped dispersed and fled into Bohemia; after which exploit, Barclay de Tolly and Yorck, who had commanded the attacking division, again united themselves with the main force of the allies, and resumed their place in the line.

Ney moved to the support of the Italians, but too late either for rescue or revenge. He united himself with the Emperor about three in the afternoon, and the army accomplished the passage of the Spree at different points, in front of the allied army. Napoleon fixed his head-quarters in the deserted town of Bautzen; and his army, advancing towards the enemy slowly and with caution, bivouacked, with their line extending east and west, and their front to the allies. The latter concentrated themselves with the same caution, abandoning whatever points they thought too distant to be effectually maintained; their position covering the principal road towards Zittau, and that to Goerlitz; their right wing (Prussians)

resting upon the fortified heights of Klein, and Klein Bautzen, which were the keys of the position, while the left wing (composed of Russians) was supported by wooded hills. The centre was rendered unapproachable by commanding batteries.

As it was vain to think of storming such a position in front, Napoleon had recourse to the manœuvre of modern war, which no general better understood,—that of turning it, and thereby rendering it unserviceable. Ney was, therefore, directed to make a considerable circuit around the Russian extreme left, while it was attacked more closely by Oudinot, who was to engage their attention by attempting to occupy the valleys, and debouching from the hills on which they rested. For this last attempt the Russians were prepared. Miloradovitch and the Prince of Wirtemberg made good the defence on this point with extreme gallantry, and the fortune of the day, notwithstanding the great exertions of Buonaparte, seemed to be with the allies. The next attempt was made on the fortified heights on the right of the allies, defended by the Prussians. Here also Napoleon encountered great difficulties, and sustained much loss. It was not till he brought up all his reserves, and combined them for one of those desperate exertions, which had so often turned the fate of battle, that he was able to succeed in his purpose.

The attack was conducted by Soult, and it was maintained at the point of the bayonet. At the price of nearly four hours' struggle, in the course of which the heights were often gained, lost, and again retaken, the French remained masters of them.

At the very time when their right point of support was carried by the French, the corps of Ney, with that of Lauriston and that of Régnier, amounting to sixty thousand men, had established themselves in the enemy's rear. It was then that Blucher was compelled to evacuate those heights which he had defended so long and so valiantly.

But although the allies were thus turned upon both flanks, and their wings in consequence forced in upon their centre, their retreat was as orderly as it had been after the battle of Lutzen. Not a gun was taken, scarce a prisoner made; the allies retired as if on the parade, placed their guns in position wherever the ground permitted, and repeatedly compelled the pursuers to deploy, for the purpose of turning them, in which operation the French suffered greatly.

The night closed, and the only decided advantage which Napoleon had derived from this day of carnage was the cutting off the allies from their retreat by the great roads on Silesia, and its capital Breslau, and driving them on the more inpracticable roads near to the Bo-

hemian frontier. But they accomplished this unfavourable change of position without being thrown into disorder, or prevented from achieving the same skilful defence by which their retreat had hitherto been protected.

The whole day of the 22d of May was spent in attacks upon the rear of the allies, which were always repelled by their coolness and military conduct. The Emperor Napoleon placed himself in the very front of the pursuing column, and exposed his person to the heavy and well-aimed fire by which Miloradovitch covered his retreat. He urged his generals to the pursuit, making use of such expressions as expressed his impetuosity. « You creep, scoundrel,» was one which he applied to a general officer upon such an occasion. He lost patience, in fact, when he came to compare the cost of the battle with its consequences, and said, in a tone of bad humour, « What, no results after so much carnage—not a gun—not a prisoner?—these people will not leave me so much as a nail. »

At the heights of Reichembach, the Russian rear-guard made a halt, and while the cuirassiers of the Guards disputed the pass with the Russian lancers, the French general, Bruyères, was struck down by a bullet. He was a veteran of the army of Italy, and favoured by Buonaparte, as having been a companion of his early honours. But Fortune had reserved for that day a still more severe trial of Na-

poleon's feelings. As he surveyed the last point on which the Russians continued to make a stand, a ball killed a trooper of his escort close by his side. « Duroc,» he said, to his ancient and faithful follower and confidant, now the Grand Marshal of his palace, « fortune has a spite at us to-day.» It was not yet exhausted.

Some time afterwards, as the Emperor with his suite rode along a hollow way, three cannon were fired. One ball shivered a tree close to Napoleon, and rebounding, killed General Kirchenner, and mortally wounded Duroc, whom the Emperor had just spoken to. A halt was ordered, and for the rest of the day Napoleon remained in front of his tent, surrounded by his Guard, who pitied their Emperor, as if he had lost one of his children. He visited the dying man, whose entrails were torn by the shot, and expressed his affection and regret. On no other but that single occasion was he ever observed so much exhausted, or absorbed by grief, as to decline listening to military details, or giving military orders. « Every thing to-morrow,» was his answer to those who ventured to ask his commands. He made more than one decree in favour of Duroc's family, and impledged the sum of two hundred Napoleons in the hands of the pastor in whose house Duroc had expired, to raise a monument to his memory, for which he dictated a modest and

affecting epitaph. In Bessières and Duroc, Napoleon lost two of his best officers and most attached friends, whose sentiments had more influence on him than others in whom he reposed less confidence. The double deprivation was of the worst omen for his fortunes.

In resuming the sum of the loss arising from the battle, we must observe that the French suffered most, because the strong position of the allies covered them from the fire. Nevertheless, the allies lost in slain and wounded about ten thousand men. It would take perhaps five thousand more to approximate the amount of the French loss.

On the day preceding that sanguinary battle, an armistice had been proposed by Count Nesselrode, in a letter to Caulaincourt, Duke of Vicenza, in compliance, it was stated, with the wishes of the court of Vienna; it was seconded by a letter from Count Stadion to Talleyrand, whom, as well as Fouché, Napoleon had summoned to his presence, because, perhaps, he doubted the effect of their intrigues during his absence, and in his difficulties. This armistice was to be preliminary to a negotiation, in which Austria proposed to assume the character of mediator.

In the mean while Napoleon marched forward, occupied Breslau (from which the princesses of the Prussian royal family removed into Bohemia), and relieved the blockade of

Glogau, where the garrison had begun to suffer by famine. Some bloody skirmishes were fought without any general result, and where Victory seemed to distribute her favours equally. But the main body of the allies showed no inclination to a third general engagement, and retreating upon Upper Silesia, not even the demonstration of advance upon Berlin itself could bring them to action.

The armistice was at length agreed upon, and signed on the 4th of June. Buonaparte showed either a sincere wish for peace, or a desire to be considered as entertaining such, by renouncing the possession of Breslau and Lower Silesia to the allies, which enabled them to regain their communications with Berlin. The interests of the world, which had been so long committed to the decision of the sword, seemed now about to be rested upon the arguments of a convention of politicians.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Change in the results formerly produced by the French Victories.—Despondency of the Generals.—Decay in the discipline of the Troops.—Views of Austria.—Arguments in favour of Peace stated and discussed.—Pertinacity of Napoleon.—State of the French Interior—hid from him by the slavery of the Press.—Interview betwixt Napoleon and the Austrian Minister, Metternich. —Delays in the Negotiations.—Plan of Pacification proposed by Austria, on 7th August.—The Armistice broken off on the 10th, when Austria joins the Allies. —Sudden placability of Napoleon at this period—Ascribed to the news of the Battle of Vittoria.

The victories of Lutzen and Bautzen were so unexpected and so brilliant, that they completely dazzled all those who reposed a superstitious confidence in Buonaparte's star, who conceived that they again saw it reviving in all the splendour of its first rising. But the expressions of Augereau to Fouché, at Mentz, as the latter passed to join Buonaparte at Dresden, show what was the sense of Napoleon's best officers. « Alas! » he said, « our sun has set.

How little do the two actions of which they make so much at Paris resemble our victories in Italy, when I taught Buonaparte the art of war, which he now abuses. How much labour has been thrown away only to win a few marches onward! At Lutzen our centre was broken, several regiments disbanded, and all was lost but for the Young Guard. We have taught the allies to beat us. After such a butchery as that of Bautzen, there were no results, no cannon taken, no prisoners made. The enemy everywhere opposed us with advantage, and we were roughly handled at Reichembach, the very day after the battle. Then one ball strikes off Bessières, another Duroc; Duroc, the only friend he had in the world. Bruyères and Kirchenner are swept away by spent bullets. What a war! it will make an end of all of us. He will not make peace; you know him as well as I do; he will cause himself to be surrounded by half a million of men, for, believe me, Austria will not be more faithful to him than Prussia. Yes, he will remain inflexible, and unless he be killed (as killed he will *not* be), there is an end of all of us.»

It was, indeed, generally observed, that though the French troops had all their usual brilliancy of courage, and although their Emperor showed all his customary talent, the ormer effect of both upon the allies seemed

in a great measure lost. The rapidity with which Buonaparte's soldiers made their attacks was now repelled with steadiness, or anticipated with yet superior alertness; so that the French, who, during their course of victory, had become so secure as to neglect the precautions of sentinels and patrols, now frequently suffered for their carelessness. On the other hand, the allies chose their days and hours of battle, continued the conflict as long as they found convenient, suspended it when it became unfavourable, and renewed it when they saw cause. There was an end to the times when a battle decided the fate of a campaign, and a campaign the course of the war.

It was also seen, that though Buonaparte had been able to renew the numbers of his army, by an unparalleled effort of exertion, it was not even in *his* power to restore the discipline which the old soldiers had lost in the horrors of the Russian retreat, and which the young levies had never acquired. The Saxons and Silesians felt that the burdens which the presence of an armed force always must inflict, were no longer mitigated by the species of discipline which the French soldiers had formerly exercised amongst themselves, and which secured against wanton outrage, and waste of the plunder which they seized. But now, it was an ordinary thing to see one body of soldiers treading down and destroying the pro-

visions, for want of which the next battalion was perhaps starving. The courage and energy of the French soldier were the same, but the recollection of former distresses had made him more selfish and more wasteful, as well as more ferocious.

Those who saw matters under this disadvantageous light, went so far, though friends both to France and Napoleon, as to wish that neither the battle of Lutzen or Bautzen had been fought, since they became, in their consequences, the greatest obstacles to a settled pacification. Even Eugène Beauharnais used this despairing language. It is true, they allowed that these memorable conflicts had sustained, or even elevated, the Emperor's military character, and that there was some truth in the courtly speech of Narbonne, who, when Napoleon desired to know what the people at Vienna thought of these actions, replied, « Some think you an angel, Sire; some a devil; but all agree you are more than man.» But, according to the sentiments of such persons, these encomiums on a point of the Emperor's character, which had before rendered him sufficiently feared, and sufficiently hated, were only calculated to elevate his mind above prudential considerations, and to render his chance of effecting a permanent reconciliation with other nations more difficult, if not alto-

gether impossible. The maxim of Europe at present seemed to be—

Odi accipitrem qui semper vivit in armis.[1]

A point was now reached, when Buonaparte's talents as a soldier were rather likely to disturb a negotiation, which an opinion of his moderate views in future, could such have been entertained on plausible grounds, would certainly have influenced favourably. This was particularly felt by Austria, who, after having received so many humiliations from Napoleon, seemed now to be called upon to decide on his destiny. The views of that power could not be mistaken. She desired to regain her lost provinces, and her influence in Germany, and unquestionably would use this propitious hour to obtain both. But then she desired still farther, for the preservation of her dominion and of her influence, that France should desist from her dream of absolute dominion, and Napoleon from those extravagant claims of universal royalty, which he had hitherto broadly acted upon. To what purpose, was asked by the friends of peace, could it avail Buonaparte to maintain large armies in Germany? To what purpose keep possession of the fortified towns, even on the eastern fron-

[1] I hate the hawk who always lives in war.

tier of that empire, excepting to show, that, whatever temporary advantage Napoleon might look for in an alliance with Austria, it was no part of his plan to abandon his conquests, or to sink from his claims of supreme dominion, into a co-ordinate prince, among the independent sovereigns of Europe.

If he meant to prosecute the war, they urged, that his lingering in Saxony and Prussia would certainly induce Austria to join the coalition against him; and that, supposing Dresden to be the pivot of his operations, he would be exposed to be taken in flank by the immense armies of Austria descending upon the valley of the Elbe, from the passes of the Bohemian mountains.

Another, and a very opposite course of measures would, said the same counsellors, be at once a guarantee to Austria, of the French Emperor's peaceable intentions, and tend to check and intimidate the other allies. Let Napoleon evacuate of free will the blockaded fortresses upon the Oder and Elbe, and thereby add to his army fifty thousand veteran troops. Let him, with these and his present army, fall back on the Rhine, so often acknowledged as the natural boundary of France. Who would dare to attack him on his own strong frontier, with such an army in front, and all the resources of France in his rear? Not Austria; for, if assured that Napoleon had abandoned his

scheme to make France victorious, and limited his views to making her happy, that power would surely desire to maintain a dynasty connected with her own, on a throne which might become a protection and ornament to Europe, instead of being her scourge and terror. The northern nations, Russia, Prussia, and Sweden, would have no motive to undertake so wild a crusade as a march to the Rhine; and Great Britain, her commerce restored, and the peace of the Continent established, could not, if she were desirous, find any sound reason for protracting the war which she had always carried on against the system, not the person, of Buonaparte, until events showed that they were indivisible. Thus, France, by assuming an attitude which expressed moderation as well as firmness, might cause the swords of the allies to drop from their hands without another drop of blood being shed.

Indeed, although it may appear, that by the course recommended Napoleon must have made great sacrifices, yet, as circumstances stood, he resigned claims dependent on the chance of war, rather than advantages in possession, and yielded up little or nothing that was firmly and effectually part of his empire. This will appear from a glance at the terms of the supposed surrender.

Spain he must have relinquished all claim to. But Napoleon had just received accounts

of the decisive battle of Vittoria, which sealed the emancipation of the Peninsula; and he must have been aware, that in this long-contested point he would lose nothing of which the fate of war had not previously deprived him, and would obtain for the south-western provinces of France, protection against the army of the Duke of Wellington, which already threatened invasion.

Germany was indeed partly in Napoleon's possession, as far as the occupation of fortresses, and such treaties as he had imposed on his vassal princes, could give him influence. But the whole nation, in every city and province, was alienated from France and her ruler, on account of the paramount sovereignty which he had assumed, and the distresses which he had brought upon them by the unceasing demand of troops for distant expeditions, and by his continental system. Besides, the enfranchisement of Germany was the very question of war and peace; and that not being granted, Napoleon must have been well aware that he must fight out the battle with Russia, Prussia, and Sweden, the insurgent Germans ready to arise on every hand, and all the weighty force of Austria to back them. If peace was to be established on any terms, the destruction of the unnatural influence of France on the right side of the Rhine must have been an indispensable article; and it was better for

Napoleon to make the cession voluntarily, than to wait till, through the insurrection of the people, and the discontent of the monarchs late his dependents, the whole system should explode and go to pieces of itself.

England would, doubtless, insist on the liberation of Holland; yet even this could be no great sacrifice on the part of Napoleon, who would have retained Flanders, and the whole left side of the Rhine, from Huningen to Antwerp, including the finest territories of the ancient Dukes of Burgundy, which had never belonged to the former Kings of France. The emancipation of Holland might have been also compensated, by the restoration of some of the French colonies. England has never made hard bargains on occasion of a general peace.

There might have been difficulties on the subject of Italy; but the near connexion betwixt the Emperors of Austria and France offered various means of accommodating these. Italy might, for example, have made an appanage for Eugène, or, in the case of such existing, for Buonaparte's second son, so as to insure the kingdoms of France and Italy passing into distinct and independent sovereignties in the next reign; or, it is believed, that if Austria had been absolutely determined to break off the treaty for this sole object, she would have found the belligerent powers in-

clined in their turn to act as mediators, and have found herself compelled to listen to moderate terms.

From what has been said, it would appear that such cessions as have been hinted at would at once have put an end to the war, leaving Napoleon still in possession of the fairest kingdom of Europe, augmented to an extent of territory greatly beyond what her most powerful monarchs before him had ever possessed; while, on the other hand, the countries and claims which, in the case supposed, he was called upon to resign, resembled the wounded mast in the tempest, which the seaman cuts away purposely, as endangering the vessel which it has ceased to assist. But it unfortunately happened, that Buonaparte, generally tenacious of his own opinion, and particularly when his reputation was concerned, imagined to himself that he could not cut away the mast without striking the colours which were nailed to it; that he could not resign his high pretensions, however unreasonable, without dimming his personal glory, in the lustre of which he placed his happiness.

He would not, therefore, listen to those, who, with such arguments as we have above stated, pressed him to make a virtue of necessity, and assume a merit from giving up what he could not attempt to hold, without

its being in all probability wrested from him. He persisted in maintaining the contrary, referred back to the various instances in which he had come off in triumph, when every other person had despaired of his safety, and had previously protested against the hazardous means which he used to ascertain it. This pertinacity did not arise solely out of the natural confidence in his own superiority, which always attends minds so powerful and so determined; it was fostered by the whole course of his life.

« At the age of thirty, » he said of himself, « I had gained victories—I had influenced the world—I had appeased a national tempest—had melted parties into one—had rallied a nation. I have, it must be allowed, been spoiled by success—I have always been in supreme command. From my first entrance into life I have enjoyed high power, and circumstances and my own force of character have been such, that from the instant I gained a superiority, I have recognized neither masters nor laws. »[1]

To a confession so ingenuous, the historian can add nothing. It is no wonder, that one to whom luck had been uniformly favourable, should love the excitation of the play, and, making cast after cast in confidence of his

[1] *Journal, etc., par* Las Cases, Vol. VII. p. 136.

own fortune, press the winning game until it became a losing one, instead of withdrawing from the table as prudence would have dictated, when the stakes deepened, and the luck began to change. Napoleon had established in his own mind, as well as that of others, an opinion, that he, in his proper person, enjoyed an amnesty from the ordinary chances of fortune.[1] This was a belief most useful to him as it was received by others, but dangerous in his own adoption of it; since it hindered him from listening in his own case to calculations, which in that of others he would have allowed to be well founded.

Both Talleyrand and Fouché gave their master the advantage of their experience on this occasion, and touched with less or more reserve upon the terror which his ambition had spread, and the determination of the allies, as well as Austria, not to make peace without such a guarantee as should protect them against future encroachments. Napoleon rejected

[1] The following is a ludicrous instance. When the explosion of the infernal machine took place, a bystander rushed into a company, and exclaimed, « The First Consul is blown up. » An Austrian veteran chancing to be of the party, who had witnessed Napoleon's wonderful escapes during the Italian campaigns, exclaimed, in ridicule of the facile credulity of the newsmonger, « *He* blown up!—Ah, you little know your man—I will wager at this moment he is as well as any of us. I know all his tricks many a day since. »

their opinion and advice with disdain, imputing it to their doubts in the persevering exertions of his genius, or to an anxiety for their own private fortunes, which induced them to desire at all risks the end of the war.

His military counsellors endeavoured to enforce similar advice, with the same want of success. Berthier, with the assistance of the celebrated engineer, Rogniat, had drawn up a plan for removing the French army, reinforced with all the garrisons which they had in Germany, from the line of the Elbe to that of the Rhine.

« Good God! » exclaimed Buonaparte, as he glanced at the labours of his adjutant-general, « ten lost battles could not bring me so low as you would have me stoop, and that, too, when I command so many strong places on the Elbe and Oder. Dresden is the point on which I will manœuvre to receive all attacks, while my enemies develope themselves like a line of circumference round a centre. Do you suppose it possible for troops of various nations, and variously commanded, to act with regularity upon such an extensive line of operations? The enemy cannot force me back on the Rhine, till they have gained ten battles; but allow me only one victory, and I will march on their capitals of Berlin and Breslau, relieve my garrisons on the Vistula and Oder, and force the allies to such a peace as shall leave my glory

untarnished. Your defensive retreat does not suit me; besides, I do not ask you for plans, but for assistance to carry into execution my own projects.»

Thus Napoleon silenced his military, as well as his civil counsellors. But there was one adviser whose mouth he had stopt, whose advice, if it could have reached him, would probably have altered his fatal resolution. One of Buonaparte's most impolitic as well as unjustifiable measures had been, his total destruction of every mode by which the public opinion of the people of France could be manifested. His system of despotism, which had left no manner of expression whatever, either by public meetings, by means of the press, or through the representative bodies, by which the national sentiments on public affairs could be made known, became now a serious evil. The manifestation of public opinion was miserably supplied by the voices of hired functionaries, who, like artificial fountains, merely returned back with various flourishes the sentiments with which they had been supplied from the common reservoir at Paris. Had free agents of any kind been permitted to report upon the state of the public mind, Napoleon would have had before him a picture which would have quickly summoned him back to France. He would have heard that the nation, blind to the evils of war while dazzled with victory and military glory,

had become acutely sensible of them so soon as these evils became associated with defeats, and the occasion of new draughts on the population of France. He would have learned that the fatal retreat of Moscow, and this precarious campaign of Saxony, had awakened parties and interests which had long been dormant—that the name of the Bourbons was again mentioned in the west—that 50,000 recusant conscripts were wandering through France, forming themselves into bands, and ready to join any standard which was raised against the Imperial authority; and that in the Legislative Body, as well as the Senate, there was already organized a tacit opposition to his government, that wanted but a moment of weakness to show itself.

All this, and more, he would have learned; and must have been taught the necessity of concentrating his forces, returning to the frontiers of France, recovering the allegiance of those who hesitated, by accepting the best terms of peace which he could extort from the allies, and assuming on the Rhine such a firm attitude of defence as should at once overawe domestic dissatisfaction, and repel foreign invasion. But the least spiracle, by which the voice of France could find its way to the ears of her sovereign, was effectually closed. The fate of Napoleon turned on this circumstance; for the sovereign who deprives himself of the

means of collecting the general sense of the nation over which he rules, is like the householder who destroys his faithful mastiff. Both may, perhaps, alarm their master by baying without just cause, or at an inconvenient time; but when the hour of action comes, no other sentinel can supply the want of their vigilance.

The armistice now afforded an apt occasion for arranging a general peace, or rather (for that was the real purpose) for giving Austria an opportunity of declaring what were her real and definitive intentions in this unexpected crisis, which had rendered her to a great degree arbitress of the fate of Europe. Napoleon, from his first arrival in Saxony, had adopted a belief, that although Austria was likely to use the present crisis as an opportunity of compelling him to restore the Illyrian provinces, and perhaps other territories of which former wars had deprived her, yet that in the end, the family connexion, with the awe entertained for his talents, would prevail to hinder her cabinet from uniting their cause to that of the allies. An expression had dropt from the Austrian minister, Metternich, which would have altered this belief, had it been reported to him.

Maret, Duke of Bassano, had pressed the Austrian hard on the ties arising from the marriage, when the Austrian answered emphati-

cally, « The marriage--yes, the marriage—it was a match founded on political considerations; *but*——»

This single brief word disclosed as much as does the least key when it opens the strongest cabinet—it made it clear that the connexion formed by the marriage would not prevent Austria from taking the line in the present dispute which general policy demanded. And this was soon seen when Count Metternich came to Dresden to have an audience of Napoleon.

This celebrated statesman and accomplished courtier had been very acceptable at the Tuileries, and Napoleon seems to have imagined him one of those persons whose gaiety and good humour were combined with a flexible character, liable to be mastered and guided by one of power and energy like his own. This was a great mistake. Metternich, a man of liveliness and address when in society, was firm and decisive in business. He saw that the opportunity of controlling the absolute power of France and of Buonaparte had at length arrived, and was determined, so far as Austria was concerned, and under his administration, that no partial views or advantages should prevent its being effectually employed. His interview with Napoleon took place at Dresden on the 28th June, and the following particulars are accredited:—

Napoleon always piqued himself on a plain, downright style of negotiation, or rather upon his system of at once announcing the only terms on which he would consent to negotiate. He would hear of no counter-project, and admit of no medium betwixt the resumption of hostilities, and acceptance of peace upon the terms which it suited him to dictate. This frank and unanswerable mode of treating greatly tended to abridge the formalities of diplomacy; it had but this single disadvantage, that it was only suitable for the lips of a victor, whose renewal of war was to be, in all human probability, the resuming a career of victory. Such a tone of negotiation became the Roman Prætor, when he environed with a circle the feeble Eastern monarch, and insisted on a categorical answer to the terms he had proposed, ere he should step beyond the line; and perhaps it became Napoleon, when, at Campo Formio, he threw down the piece of porcelain, declaring that the Austrian Empire should be destroyed in the same manner, unless they instantly accepted his conditions. But the same abrupt dictatorial manner was less felicitously employed, when the question was to persuade Austria not to throw her force of 200,000 men into the scale of the allies, which already too equally balanced that of France; yet that ill-chosen tone may be observed in the following conference.

Napoleon upbraided Metternich with having favoured his adversaries, by being so tardy in opening the negotiation. He intimated that the Austrian minister perhaps staid away, in order that France might be reduced to a lower state than at the opening of the campaign; while now that he had gained two battles, Austria thrust in her mediation, that he might be prevented from following up his success. In claiming to be a negotiator, Austria, he said, was neither his friend nor his impartial judge—she was his enemy. « You were about to declare yourselves, » he said, « when the victory at Lutzen rendered it prudent in the first place to collect more forces. Now you have assembled behind the skreen of the Bohemian mountains 200,000 men under Schwartzenberg's command. Ah, Metternich! I guess the purpose of your cabinet. You wish to profit by my embarrassments, and seize on the favourable moment to regain as much as you can of what I have taken from you. The only question with you is, whether you will make most by allowing me to ransom myself, or by going to war with me?—You are uncertain on that point; and perhaps you only come here to ascertain which is your best course. Well, let us drive a bargain—How much is it you want? »

To this insulting commencement Metternich replied, that « the only advantage desired by

his master, was to see that moderation and respect for the rights of nations which filled his own bosom, restored to the general councils of Europe, and such a well-balanced system introduced as should place the universal tranquillity under the guarantee of an association of independent states.»

It was easy to see which way this pointed, and to anticipate the conclusion. Napoleon affected to treat it as a figure of speech, which was to cloak the private views of Austria. « I speak clearly,» he said, « and come to the point. Will it suit you to accept of Illyria, and to remain neuter?—Your neutrality is all I require. I can deal with the Russians and Prussians with my own army.»

« Ah, Sire,» replied Metternich, « it depends solely on your Majesty to unite all our forces with yours. But the truth must be told. Matters are come to that extremity that Austria cannot remain neutral—We must be with you, or against you.»

After this explicit declaration, from which it was to be inferred that Austria would not lay aside her arms, unless Buonaparte would comply with the terms which she had fixed upon as the conditions of a general pacification, and that she was determined to refuse all that might be offered as a bribe for her neutrality, the Emperor of France and the Austrian statesman retired into a cabinet, apart

from the secretaries, where it is to be presumed Metternich communicated more specifically the conditions which Austria had to propose. Napoleon's voice was presently heard, exclaiming aloud, « What! not only Illyria, but half of Italy, the restoration of the Pope, and the abandoning of Poland, and the resignation of Spain, and Holland, and the Confederation of the Rhine, and Switzerland! Is this your moderation? You hawk about your alliance from the one camp to the other, where the greatest partition of territory is to be obtained, and then you talk of the independence of nations! In plain truth, you would have Italy; Sweden demands Norway; Prussia requires Saxony; England would have Holland and Belgium— You would dismember the French Empire; and all these changes to be operated by Austria's mere threat of going to war. Can you pretend to win, by a single stroke of the pen, so many of the strongest fortresses in Europe, the keys of which I have gained by battles and victories? And think you that I will be so docile as to march back my soldiers, with their arms reversed, over the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees, and by subscribing a treaty, which is one vast capitulation, deliver myself, like a fool, into the hands of my enemies, and trust for a doubtful permission to exist, to their generosity? Is it when my army is triumphing at the gates of Berlin and Breslau, that

Austria hopes to extort such a cession from me, without striking a blow or drawing a sword? It is an affront to expect it. And is it my father-in-law who entertains such a project? Is it he who sends you to me? In what attitude would he place me before the eyes of the French people! He is in a strange mistake if he supposes that a mutilated throne can, in France, afford shelter to his daughter and his grandson—— Ah, Metternich,» he concluded, «what has England given you to induce you to make war on me?»

The Austrian minister disdaining to defend himself against so coarse an accusation, only replied by a look of scorn and resentment. A profound silence followed, during which Napoleon and Metternich traversed the apartment with long steps, without looking at each other. Napoleon dropt his hat, perhaps to give a turn to this awkward situation. But Metternich was too deeply affronted for any office of courtesy, and the Emperor was obliged to lift it himself. Buonaparte then resumed the discourse, in a more temperate strain, and said he did not yet despair of peace. He insisted that the congress should be assembled, and that, even if hostilities should recommence, negotiations for peace should, nevertheless, not be discontinued. And, like a wary trader when driving a bargain, he whis-

pered Metternich, that his offer of Illyria was *not his last word.*

His last word, however, had been in reality spoken, and both he and Metternich were fully acquainted with each other's views. Metternich had refused all private conditions which could be offered to detach Austria from the general cause, and Buonaparte had rejected as an insult any terms which went to lower him to a rank of equality with the other sovereigns of Europe. He would be Cæsar or nothing. It did not mend the prospect of negotiation, that he had formally insulted one of the persons most influential in the Austrian councils. The chance of peace seemed farther off than ever.

Accordingly, all the proceedings at the Congress of Prague were lingering and evasive. The meeting had been fixed for the 5th July, and the dissolution was postponed till the 10th August, in order to allow time for trying to adjust the disputed claims. England had declined being concerned with the armistice, alleging she was satisfied that Napoleon would come to no reasonable terms. Caulaincourt, to whom Buonaparte chiefly trusted the negotiation, did not appear till 25th July, detained, it was idly alleged, by his services as an officer of the palace. Austria spun out the time by proposing that the other commissioners should

hold no direct intercourse, but only negotiate through the medium of the Mediator. Other disputes arose; and in fact, it seems as if all parties manœuvred to gain time, with a view to forward military preparations, rather than to avail themselves of the brief space allowed for adjusting the articles of peace. At length, so late as the 7th August, Austria produced her plan of pacification, of which the bases were the following:—1. The dissolution of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, which was to be divided between Russia, Prussia, and Austria. 2. The re-establishment of the Hanseatic towns in their former independence. 3. The reconstruction of Prussia, assigning to that kingdom a frontier on the Elbe. 4. The cession to Austria of the maritime town of Trieste, with the Illyrian provinces. The emancipation of Spain and Holland, as matters in which England, no party to the Congress, took chief interest, was not stirred for the present, but reserved for consideration at the general peace. A concluding article stipulated that the condition of the European powers, great and small, as might be settled at the peace, should be guaranteed to all and each of them, and not innovated upon except by general consent.

Buonaparte in return offered much, but most of his cessions were clogged with conditions, which at once showed how unwillingly they

were made, and seemed, in most cases, to provide the means of annulling them when times should be favourable.

1. The Grand Duchy of Warsaw Napoleon agreed to yield up, but stipulated that Dantzic, with its fortifications demolished, should remain a free town, and that Saxony should be indemnified for the cession of the duchy, at the expense of Prussia and Austria. 2. The cession of the Illyrian provinces was agreed to, but the seaport of Trieste was reserved. 3. Contained a stipulation that the German Confederation should extend to the Oder. Lastly, the territory of Denmark was to be guaranteed.

Before this tardy agreement to grant some of the terms which the allies had demanded could arrive at Prague, the 10th of August, the day which concluded the armistice, had expired, and Austria had passed from the friendship of France into the Federation of the Allies. On the night betwixt the 10th and 11th, rockets of a new and brilliant kind flickered in the air from height to height, betwixt Prague and Trachenberg, the head-quarters of the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia, to announce to these sovereigns that the armistice was broken off.

Metternich and Caulaincourt still continued their negotiations; and Napoleon seemed on a sudden sincerely desirous of the peace about which he had hitherto trifled. Metternich per-

sisted in his demand of Trieste and the Hanse towns. He rejected the extension of the Confederation of the Rhine, as a demand made at a time so ill-chosen as to be nearly ridiculous; and he required that the independence of Germany should be declared free, as well as that of Switzerland.

Buonaparte at length consented to all these demands, which, if they had been admitted during his interview with Metternich, on 28th June, or declared to the Congress before the 10th August, must have availed to secure peace. It is probable, either that Napoleon was unwilling to make his mind up to consent to terms which he thought humiliating, or that he made the concessions at a time when they would not, in all likelihood, be accepted, in order that he might obtain the chance of war, yet preserve with his subjects the credit of having been willing to make peace.

It has been said, with much plausibility, that the allies, on their part, were confirmed in their resolution to demand high terms, by the news of the decisive battle of Vittoria, and the probability, that, in consequence, the Duke of Wellington's army might be soon employed in the invasion of France. Napoleon entertained the same impression, and sent Soult, the ablest of his generals, to make a stand, if possible, against the victorious English gene-

ral, and protect at least the territory of France itself[1]

[1] The court of Napoleon were amused at this time by an incident connected with Soult's departure. As he had been designed to command in the German campaign, this new destination compelled him to sell his horses, and make various other inconvenient sacrifices to the hurry of the moment. His wife, the Duchess of Dalmatia, a lady of a spirit equal to that of the great soldier to whom she was wedded, went boldly into the Emperor's presence to state her grievances; to insist that her husband had been subjected to too much fatiguing service, and to remonstrate against his being employed in the Pyrenees. «Go, madam,» said Napoleon, sternly; «remember that I am not your husband, and if I were, you dared not use me thus. Go, and remember it is a wife's duty to assist her husband, not to tease him.» Such was (with every respect to the lady, who might, notwithstanding, do well to be angry) the Imperial «Taming of a Shrew.»

CHAPTER XIX.

Amount and distribution of the French Army at the resumption of Hostilities—Of the Armies of the Allies.—Plan of the Campaign on both sides.—Return of Moreau from America, to join the Allies.—Attack on Dresden by the Allies, on 26th August—Napoleon arrives to its succour.—Battle continued on the 27th—Death of General Moreau—Defeat and Retreat of the Allies, with great loss—Napoleon returns from the pursuit to Dresden, indisposed.—Vandamme attacks the Allies at Culm—is opposed, and driven back towards Peterswald—Singular Conflict between the French and Prussians on the heights of Peterswald—Vandamme is Defeated and made Prisoner, with great loss.—Effects of the victory of Culm on the Allies—and on Napoleon.

At no period during the armistice had the hopes of peace been so probable, as to suspend for a moment the most active preparations for war.

Napoleon, determined, as we have already seen, to render Dresden the centre of his operations, had exerted the utmost industry in converting that beautiful capital into a species of citadel. All the trees in the neighbourhood,

including those which so much adorned the public gardens and walks, had been cut down, and employed in the construction of a chain of redoubts and field-works, secured by fosses and palisades, which were calculated to render the city very defensible. But, besides Dresden itself, with the neighbouring mountain-fortresses, the French Emperor possessed as strongly fortified places, Torgau, Wittembourg, Magdeburg, and others on the Elbe, which secured him the possession of the rich and beautiful valley of that river. He had established an entrenched camp at the celebrated position of Pirna, and thrown a bridge of boats over the Elbe, near Kœnigstein, for the purpose of maintaining a communication betwixt that mountain-fortress and the fort of Stolpen. This showed Napoleon's apprehension of an attack from the mountains of Bohemia, behind which the Austrians had been assembling their army. In this destined battle-ground Napoleon assembled the young conscripts, who continued to pour from the French frontier; and who, by a singularly ingenious species of combination, were learning the duties of their new condition, even while, with arms in their hands for the first time, they were marching to the field of action.[1]

[1] According to orders accurately calculated, the little bands of recruits, setting off from different points, or dépôts, on the frontier, met together at places assigned,

In the beginning of August, Napoleon had assembled about 250,000 men in Saxony and Silesia. This great force was stationed so as best to confront the enemy on the points where they had assembled their troops. At Leipsic, there were collected 60,000 men, under command of Oudinot. At Loewenberg, Goldberg, Bantzlau, and other towns on the borders of Silesia, were 100,000 men, commanded by Macdonald. Another army of 50,000 were quartered in Lusatia, near Zittau. St-Cyr, with 20,000, was stationed near Pirna, to observe the mountains of Bohemia, and the passes through which the Elbe discharges its waters upon Saxony. In Dresden the Emperor himself lay with his Guard, amounting to 25,000 men, the flower of his army. Besides these hosts, Buonaparte had a considerable army in Italy under the Viceroy Eugène; and 25,000 Bavarians were assembled as an army of reserve, under General Wrede. Almost all his old lieutenants, who had fought, and won so

and, as their numbers increased by each successive junction, were formed first into companies, next into battalions, and last into regiments; learning, of course, to practise successively the duties belonging to these various bodies. When they joined the army, these combinations, which had but been adopted temporarily, were laid aside, the union of the marching battalion dissolved, and the conscripts distributed among old regiments, whose example might complete the discipline which they had thus learned in a general way.

often in his cause, were summoned to attend this important war; and even Murat, who had been on indifferent terms with his relative, came anew from his beautiful capital of Naples, to enjoy the pleasure of wielding his sabre against his old friends the Cossacks.

The preparations of the allies were upon a scale equally ample. The accession of the Austrians had placed at disposal in Bohemia 120,000 men, to whom the allies joined 80,000 Russians and Prussians, which brought the whole force to 200,000 men. Schwartzenberg had been selected to command this, which was called the Grand Army of the Allies,—a judicious choice, not only as a fitting compliment to the Emperor of Austria, who had joined the confederacy at so critical a moment, but on account of Schwartzenberg's military talents, his excellent sound sense, penetration, good humour, and placidity of temper; qualities essential in every general, but especially in him upon whom reposes the delicate duty of commanding an army composed of different nations. This large host lay in and about Prague, and, concealed by the chain of hills called the Erzgebirge, was ready to rush into Saxony so soon as an opportunity should offer of surprising Dresden.

The other moiety of the original invading army amounting to 80,000, consisting of Russians and Prussians, called the Army of Silesia,

and commanded by Blucher, defended the frontier of that country, and the road to Breslau. Nearer the gates of Berlin was the Crown Prince of Sweden, with an army consisting of 30,000 Swedes, and about 60,000 Prussians and Russians; the former being the corps of Bulow and Tauenzein; the latter those of Winzengerode and Woronzoff. Besides these armies, Walmoden, with a force consisting of 30,000 Russians, Prussians, and insurgent Germans, was at Schwerin, in the Duchy of Mecklenberg; Hiller, with 40,000 Austrians, watched the Italian army of the Viceroy; and the Prince of Reuss confronted the Bavarian troops with an army equal in strength to Wrede's own.

The allies had agreed upon a plan of operations equally cautious and effective. It is believed to have been originally sketched by the Crown Prince of Sweden, and afterwards revised and approved by the celebrated Moreau. That renowned French general had been induced, by the complexion of matters in Europe, and the invitation of Russia, to leave America, join the camp of the allies, and bring all the knowledge of the art of war, for which he was so famous, to enlighten their military councils. His conduct in thus passing over to the camp of France's enemies, has been ably defended by some, as the act of a patriot who desired to destroy the despotism which had

been established in his country, while others have censured him for arming against his native land, in revenge for unworthy usage which he had received from its ruler. Much of the justice of the case must rest upon what we cannot know—the purpose, namely, of Moreau, in case of ultimate success. He certainly had not, as Bernadotte might plead, acquired such rights in, and such obligations to, another country, as to supersede the natural claims of his birth-place. Yet he might be justified in the eye of patriotism, if his ultimate object really was to restore France to a rational degree of liberty, under a regulated government; and such it is stated to have been. Any purpose short of this must leave him guilty of the charge of having sacrificed his duty to his country to his private revenge. He was, however, highly honoured by the Emperor of Russia in particular; and his presence was justly considered as a great accession to the council of war of the allies.

So many men of talent, and two of them masters of the French tactics, had no difficulty in divining the mode in which Buonaparte meant to conduct the present campaign. They easily saw that he intended to join his strong and effective reserve of the Guard to any of the armies placed on the frontier of Saxony, where a point of attack presented itself; and thus advance upon, overpower, and destroy the enemy

whom he should find in front, as the hunted tiger springs upon the victim which he has selected out of the circle of hunters, who surround him with protended spears. To meet this mode of attack, which might otherwise have been the means of the allied armies being defeated successively and in detail, it was resolved that the general against whom Buonaparte's first effort should be directed, should on no account accept of the proffered battle, but, withdrawing his troops before the Emperor, should decoy him as far as possible in pursuit, while at the same time the other armies of the allies should advance upon his rear, destroy his communications, and finally effect their purpose of closing round him in every direction.

The Grand-Army, commanded by Schwartzenberg, was particularly directed to this latter task, because, while it would have been dangerous in Napoleon on that point to have sought them out by storming the mountain-passes of Bohemia, nothing could be more easy for Schwartzenberg than to rush down upon Dresden when Buonaparte should leave that city uncovered, for however short an interval.

Blucher was the first who, advancing from Silesia, and menacing the armies of Macdonald and Ney, induced Buonaparte to march to join them with his Guard, and with a great body of cavalry commanded by Latour Maubourg.

He left Dresden on the 15th August; he threw bridges over the Bober, and advanced with rapidity, bringing forward Macdonald's division in aid of his own force. But the Prussian general was faithful to the plain laid down. He made an admirable retreat across the Kutzbach, admitting the French to nothing but skirmishes, in which the allies had some advantage. Finally, he established himself in a position on the river Niesse, near Jauer, so as to cover Silesia and its capital.

On the 21st August, Napoleon learned the interesting news, that while he was pressing forward on the retreating Prussians, Dresden was in the utmost danger of being taken. His Guards had instant orders to return to Saxony. He himself set out early on the 23d. It was full time; for Schwartzenberg, with whom came the sovereigns of Russia and Prussia, as well as General Moreau, had descended from Bohemia, and, concentrating their Grand Army on the left bank of the Elbe, were already approaching the walls of Dresden, Napoleon's point of support, and the pivot of his operations. Leaving, therefore, to Macdonald the task of controlling Blucher, the Emperor set out with the *élite* of his army; yet, with all the speed he could exert, very nearly came too late to save the object of his solicitude.

General St-Cyr, who had been left with about 20,000 men to observe the Bohemian passes,

was in no condition to make a stand, when they poured out upon him six or seven times his own number. He threw himself with his troops into Dresden, in hopes, by means of its recent fortifications, to defend it until the arrival of Napoleon. The allies having found little resistance on their march, displayed their huge army before the city, divided into four columns, about four o'clock on the 25th August, and instantly commenced the assault. If they should be able to take Dresden before it could be relieved by Buonaparte, the war might be considered as nearly ended, since they would in that case obtain complete command of his line of communication with France, and had at their mercy his recruits and supplies of every kind.

The scheme of attack was excellently laid, but the allied generals did not pursue it with the necessary activity. The signal for onset should have been given instantly, yet they paused for the arrival of Klenau, with an additional corps d'armée, and the assault was postponed until next morning.

On the 26th, at break of day, the allies advanced in six columns, under a tremendous fire. They carried a great redoubt near the city-gate of Dippoldiswalde, and soon after another; they closed on the French on every point; the bombs and balls began to fall thick on the streets and houses of the terrified city;

and, in engaging all his reserves, St-Cyr, whose conduct was heroical, felt he had yet too few men to defend works of such extent. It was at this crisis, while all thought a surrender was inevitable, that columns, rushing forward with the rapidity of a torrent, were seen advancing on Dresden from the right side of the Elbe, sweeping over its magnificent bridges, and pressing through the streets, to engage in the defence of the almost overpowered city. The Child of Destiny himself was beheld amidst his soldiers, who, far from exhibiting fatigue, notwithstanding a severe forced march from the frontiers of Silesia, demanded, with loud cries, to be led into immediate battle. Napoleon halted to reassure the King of Saxony, who was apprehensive of the destruction of his capital, while his troops, marching through the city, halted on the western side, at those avenues, from which it was designed they should debouche upon the enemy.

Two sallies were then made under Napoleon's eye, by Ney and Mortier. The one column, pouring from the gate of Plauen, attacked the allies on the left flank; the others, issuing from that of Pirna, assailed their right. The Prussians were dislodged from an open space, called the Great Garden, which covered their advance upon the ramparts; and the war began already to change its face, the allies drawing off from the points they had attacked

so fiercely, where they found them secured by these unexpected defenders. They remained, however, in front of each other, the sentinels on each side being in close vicinity, until next morning.

On the 27th of August, the battle was renewed under torrents of rain, and amid a tempest of wind. Napoleon, manœuvring with excellence altogether his own, caused his troops, now increased by concentration to nearly 200,000 men, to file out from the city upon different points, the several columns diverging from each other like the sticks of a fan when it is expanded; and thus directed them upon such points as seemed most assailable along the allies' whole position, which occupied the heights from Plauen to Strehlen. In this manner, his plan assisted by the stormy weather, which served to conceal his movements, he commenced an attack upon both flanks of the enemy. On the left he obtained an advantage, from a large interval left in the allied line, to receive the division of Klenau, who were in the act of coming up, but fatigued and exhausted with fatigue and bad weather, and their muskets rendered almost unserviceable. In the mean while, as a heavy cannonade was continued on both sides, Napoleon observed one of the batteries of the Young Guard slacken its fire. General Gourgaud, sent to inquire the cause, brought information that the guns

were placed too low to reply with advantage to the enemy's fire from the high ground, and that the balls from the French battery were most of them lost in the earth. « Fire on, nevertheless, » was the Emperor's reply; « we must occupy the attention of the enemy on that point. »

The fire was resumed, and from an extraordinary movement amongst the troops on the hill, the French became aware that some person of high rank had been struck down. Napoleon supposed that the sufferer must be Schwartzenberg. He paid him a tribute of regret, and added, with the sort of superstition peculiar to his mind, « *He*, then, was the victim whom the fatal fire at the ball indicated?[1] I always regarded it as a presage—it is now plain whom it concerned. »

Next morning, however, a peasant brought to Napoleon more precise accounts. The officer of distinction had both legs shattered by the fatal bullet—he was transported from the field on a bier composed of lances—the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia had expressed the greatest sorrow and solicitude. The man ended this account by bringing the fallen officer's dog, a greyhound, whose collar bore the name of Moreau. This great general

[1] Given on account of the marriage of Napoleon and Maria Louisa.—See Vol. VII. p. 18.

died a few days afterwards, having suffered amputation of the wounded limbs, which he bore with great fortitude. His talents and personal worth were undisputed, and those who, more bold than we are, shall decide that his conduct in one instance too much resemed that of Coriolanus and the Constable of Bourbon, must yet allow that the fault, like that of those great men, was atoned for by an early and a violent death.

Moreau is said to have formed the plan on which the attack on Dresden was conducted. His death must, therefore, have disconcerted it. But besides this, the allies had calculated upon Buonaparte's absence, and upon the place being slightly defended. They were disappointed in both respects; and his sudden arrival at the head of a choice, if not a numerous army, had entirely changed the nature of the combat. They had become defenders at the very time when they reckoned on being assailants; and their troops, particularly the Austrians, who had in former wars received such dreadful cause to recollect the name of Napoleon, were discouraged. Even if they repelled the French into Dresden, they had provided no magazines of support in front of it, should the allied army be designed to remain there. Jomini, the celebrated Swiss engineer, who had exchanged, some short time before, the service of Napoleon for that of the Emperor

Alexander, proposed the daring plan of changing the front of the army during the action, and attacking in force the left of the French, which might have turned the fortune of the day. But the experiment was thought, with some justice, too perilous to be attempted, with a discouraged and disordered army. A retreat was, therefore, resolved upon, and, owing to the weather, the state of the roads, and the close pursuit of the French, it was a disastrous one. The successful operations of the French had established the King of Naples on the western road to Bohemia, by Freyberg; and Vandamme, with a strong division, blocked up that which led directly southward up the Elbe, by Pirna.

The two principal roads being thus closed against Schwartzenberg and his army, nothing remained for them but to retreat through the interval between these highways by such country paths as they could find, which, bad in themselves, had been rendered almost impassable by the weather. They were pursued by the French in every direction, and lost, what had of late been unusual, a great number of prisoners. Seven or eight thousand of the French were killed and wounded; but the loss of the allies was as great, while their prisoners, almost all Austrians, amounted to from 13,000 to 15,000. This is admitted by Boutourlin. The French carry the loss to 50,000, which is

an obvious exaggeration; but half the number does not probably exceed the real extent of the loss. It is singular, however, that in such roads as have been described, the allies, out of more than one hundred guns which they brought into position, should have lost only twenty-six. It was, notwithstanding, a battle with important consequences, such as had not of late resulted from any of Napoleon's great victories. It proved, indeed, the last favour of an unmixed character which Fortune reserved for her ancient favourite, and it had all the dazzling rapidity and resistless strength of an unexpected thunderbolt.

Having seen this brilliant day to a close, Napoleon returned to Dresden on horseback, his gray capote and slouched hat streaming with water, while the indifferent appearance of his horse and furniture, his awkward seat and carriage, made a singular contrast with those of Murat, whose bearing as a horseman was inimitable, and whose battle-dress was always distinguished by its theatrical finery.

The venerable King of Saxony received his deliverer with rapture, for to him, personally, Buonaparte certainly was such, though considered by many of his subjects in a very different light. Napoleon behaved generously after the action, distributing money amongst the citizens of Dresden, who had suffered from the cannonade, and causing the greatest care

to be taken of the wounded and prisoners belonging to the allies.

The next morning this ever-vigilant spirit was again on horseback, directing his victorious troops in pursuit of the enemy. They were dispatched in different columns, to pursue the allies on the broken roads by which they were compelled to retreat, and to allow them no rest nor refuge. No frame, even of iron, could have supported the fatigues of both mind and body to which Napoleon had subjected himself within the last three or four days. He was perpetually exposed to the storm, and had rarely taken rest or refreshment. He is also stated to have suffered from having eaten hastily some food of a coarse and indigestible quality.[1] Through one or other, or the whole of these causes combined, Napoleon became very much indisposed, and was prevailed upon to return in his carriage to Dresden, instead of remaining at Pirna, more close in the rear of his pursuing battalions, to direct their motions. The French officers, at least some of them, ascribe to this circum-

[1] To be precise,—a shoulder of mutton, stuffed with garlic, was the only dinner which his attendants could procure for him on the 27th. Mahomet, who was a favourite of Napoleon, suffered by indulging in similar viands. But the shoulder of mutton, in the case of the Arabian prophet, had the condescension to give its consumer warning of its deleterious qualities, though not till he had eaten too much for his health.

stance, as the primary cause, a great, critical, and most unexpected misfortune, which befel his arms at this time.

On the 29th of August, the French still continued to push their advantages. The King of Naples, Marmont, and St-Cyr, were each pressing upon the pursuit of the columns of the allies, to which they had been severally attached. A corps d'armée, of about thirty thousand men, had been intrusted to the conduct of Vandamme, whose character as a general, for skill, determined bravery, and activity, was respected, while he was detested by the Germans on account of his rudeness and rapacity, and disliked by his comrades because of the ferocious obstinacy of his disposition.[1] With this man, who, not without some of the good qualities which distinguished Buonaparte's officers, presented even a caricature of the vices ascribed to them, the misfortunes of his master in this campaign were destined to commence.

Vandamme had advanced as far as Peterswald, a small town in the Erzgebirge, or Bohemian

[1] The Abbé de Pradt represents Vandamme at Warsaw as beating with his own hand a priest, the secretary of a Polish bishop, for not having furnished him with a supply of tokay, although the poor man had to plead in excuse that King Jérôme had the day before carried off all that was in the cellar. A saying was ascribed to Buonaparte, « that if he had had two Vandammes in his service, he must have made the one hang the other.»

mountains, forcing before him a column of Russians, feeble in number, but excellent in point of character and discipline, commanded by Count Ostermann, who were retreating upon Toplitz. This town was the point on which all the retiring, some of which might be almost termed the fugitive, divisions of the allies were directing their course. If Vandamme could have defeated Ostermann, and carried this place, he might have established himself, with his corps of 30,000 men, on the only road practicable for artillery, by which the allies could march to Prague; so that they must either have remained inclosed between his corps d'armée, and those of the other French generals who pressed on their rear, or else they must have abandoned their guns and baggage, and endeavoured to cross the mountains by such wild tracks as were used only by shepherds and peasants.

It was on the 29th, in the morning, that, acting under so strong a temptation as we have mentioned, Vandamme had the temerity to descend the hill from Peterswald, to the village of Culm, which is situated in a very deep valley betwixt that town and Toplitz. As he advanced towards Toplitz, it appeared that his plan was about to be crowned with success. The persons of the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, the members of their cabinet, and the whole dépôt of the head-quarters of

the allies, seemed now within his clutch, and, already alarmed, his expected prey were beginning to attempt their escape in different directions. Vandamme seemed within a hand's grasp of the prize; for his operation, if complete, must have totally disorganized the allied army, and the French might perhaps have pursued them to the very gates of Prague, nay, of Vienna. The French advanced guard was within half a league of Toplitz, when of a sudden Count Ostermann, who had hitherto retreated slowly, halted, like a wild boar brought to bay, and commenced the most obstinate and inflexible resistance. His troops were few, but, as already said, of excellent quality, being a part of the Imperial Russian Guard, whom their commander gave to understand that the safety of their father (as the Russians affectionately term the Emperor) depended upon their maintaining their ground. Never was the saying of Frederick II., that the Russians might be slain but not routed, more completely verified. They stood firm as a grove of pines opposed to the tempest, while Vandamme led down corps after corps, to support his furious and repeated attacks, until at length he had brought his very last reserves from the commanding ground of Peterswald, and accumulated them in the deep valley between Culm and Toplitz. The brave Ostermann had lost an arm in the action, and his

grenadiers had suffered severely; but they had gained the time necessary. Barclay de Tolly, who now approached the scene of action, brought up the first columns of the Russians to their support; Schwartzenberg sent other succours; and Vandamme, in his turn, overpowered by numbers, retreated to Culm as night closed.

Prudence would have recommended to the French to have continued their retreat during the night to the heights of Peterswald, but, expecting probably the appearance of some of the French columns of pursuit, morning found Vandamme in the valley of Culm, where night had set upon him. In the mean time, still greater numbers of the allied corps, which were wandering through these mountain regions, repaired to the banners of Schwartzenberg and Barclay de Tolly, and the attack was renewed upon the French column at break of day on the 30th, with a superiority of force, with which it was fruitless to contend. Vandamme therefore disposed himself to retreat towards the heights of Peterswald, from which he had descended. But at this moment took place one of the most singular accidents which distinguished this eventful war.

Among other corps d'armée of the allies, which were making their way through the mountains, to rally to the main body as they best could, was that of the Prussian general,

Kleist, who had evaded the pursuit of St-Cyr, by throwing himself into the wood of Schoenwald, out of which he debouched on the position of Peterswald, towards which Vandamme was making his retreat. While, therefore, Vandamme's retreating columns were ascending the heights, the ridge which they proposed to gain was seen suddenly occupied by the troops of Kleist, in such a state of disorder as announced they were escaped from some pressing scene of danger, or hurrying on to some hasty attack.

When the Prussians came in sight of the French, they conceived that the latter were there for the purpose of cutting them off, and instead of taking a position on the heights to intercept Vandamme, they determined, it would seem, to precipitate themselves down, break their way through his troops, and force themselves on to Toplitz. On the other hand, the French, seeing their way interrupted, formed the same conclusion with regard to Kleist's corps, which the Prussians had done concerning them; and each army being bent on making its way through that opposed to them, the Prussians rushed down the hill, while the French ascended it with a bravery of despair, that supplied the advantage of ground.

The two armies were thus hurled on each other like two conflicting mobs, enclosed in a deep and narrow road, forming the descent

along the side of a mountain. The onset of the French horse, under Corbineau, was so desperate, that many or most of them broke through, although the acclivity against which they advanced would not in other circumstances have permitted them to ascend at a trot; and the guns of the Prussians were for a moment in the hands of the French, who slew many of the artillerymen. The Prussians, however, soon rallied, and the two struggling bodies, again mixing together, fought less for the purpose of victory or slaughter, than to force their way through each other's ranks, and escape in opposite directions. All became for a time a mass of confusion, the Prussian generals finding themselves in the middle of the French—the French officers in the centre of the Prussians. But the army of the Russians, who were in pursuit of Vandamme, appearing in his rear, put an end to this singular conflict. Generals Vandamme, Haxo, and Guyot, were made prisoners, with two eagles and 7000 prisoners, besides a great loss in killed and wounded, and the total dispersion of the army, many of whom, however, afterwards rejoined their eagles.

The victory of Culm, an event so unexpected and important in a military view, was beyond appreciation in the consequences which it produced upon the moral feelings of the allied troops. Before this most propitious event,

they were retiring as a routed army, the officers and soldiers complaining of their generals, and their generals of each other. But now their note was entirely altered, and they could sing songs of triumph, and appeal to the train of guns and long columns of prisoners, in support of the victory which they claimed. The spirits of all were reconciled to the eager prosecution of the war, and the hopes of liberation spread wider and wider through Germany. The other French corps d'armée, on the contrary, fearful of committing themselves as Vandamme had done, paused on arriving at the verge of the Bohemian mountains, and followed no farther the advantages of the battle of Dresden. The King of Naples halted at Sayda, Marmont at Zinnwalde, and St-Cyr at Liebenau. The head-quarters of the Emperor Alexander remained at Toplitz.

Napoleon received the news of this calamity, however unexpected, with the imperturbable calmness which was one of his distinguishing qualities. General Corbineau, who commanded in the singular charge of the cavalry up the hill of Peterswald, presented himself before the Emperor in the condition in which he escaped from the field, covered with his own blood and that of the enemy, and holding in his hand a Prussian sabre, which, in the thick of the mêlée, he had exchanged for his own. Napoleon listened composedly to the

details he had to give. «One should make a bridge of gold for a flying enemy,» he said, «where it is impossible, as in Vandamme's case, to oppose to him a bulwark of steel.» He then anxiously examined the instructions to Vandamme, to discover if any thing had inadvertently slipped into them, to encourage the false step which that general had taken. But nothing was found which could justify or authorize his advancing beyond Peterswald, although the chance of possessing himself of Toplitz must have been acknowledged as a strong temptation.

«This is the fate of war,» said Buonaparte, turning to Murat. «Exalted in the morning, low enough before night. There is but one step between triumph and ruin.» He then fixed his eyes on the map which lay before him, took his compass, and repeated, in a reverie, the following verses:—

J'ai servi, commandé, vaincu quarante années;
Du monde entre mes mains j'ai vu les destinées;
Et j'ai toujours connu qu'en chaque événement
Le destin des états dépendait d'un moment.

CHAPTER XX.

Military Proceedings in the North of Germany, in which the French were generally unsuccessful.—Luckau submits to the Crown Prince of Sweden.—Battles of Gross-Beeren and the Katzbach, where the French suffer heavy loss in men and guns.—Operations of Ney upon Berlin —He is defeated at Dennewitz on the 6th September.—Difficult and embarrassing Situation of Napoleon—He abandons all the right side of the Elbe to the Allies.—Operations of the Allies in order to effect a junction—Counter-exertions of Napoleon.—The French Generals averse to continuing the War in Germany—Dissensions betwixt them and the Emperor.—Napoleon at length resolves to Retreat upon Leipsic.

THE advices which arrived at Dresden from the north of Germany were no balm to the bad tidings from Bohemia. We must necessarily treat with brevity the high deeds of arms performed at a considerable distançe from Napoleon's person, great as was their influence upon his fortunes.

Mareschal Blucher, it will be remembered, retreated across the river Katzbach, to avoid the engagement which the Emperor of France endeavoured to press upon him. The Crown

Prince of Sweden, on the other hand, had his head quarters at Potsdam. Napoleon, when departing to succour Dresden, on the 21st of August, left orders for Oudinot to advance on Berlin, and for Macdonald to march upon Breslau, trusting that the former had force enough to conquer the Crown Prince, the latter to defeat Blucher.

Oudinot began to move on Berlin by the road of Wittenberg, on the very day when he received the orders. On the other hand, the Crown Prince of Sweden, concentrating his troops, opposed to the French general a total force of more than eighty thousand men, drawn up for the protection of Berlin. The sight of that fair city, with its towers and steeples, determined Oudinot to try his fortune with his ancient comrade in arms. After a good deal of skirmishing, the two armies came to a more serious battle on the 23d August, in which General Régnier distinguished himself. He commanded a corps which formed the centre of Oudinot's army, at the head of which he made himself master of the village of Gross-Beeren, which was within a short distance of the centre of the allies. The Prussian general, Bulow, advanced to recover this important post, and with the assistance of Borstal, who attacked the flank of the enemy, he succeeded in pushing his columns into the village. A heavy rain having prevented the muskets from

being serviceable, Gross-Beeren was disputed with the bayonet. Yet, towards nightfall, the two French divisions of Fournier and Guilleminot again attacked the village, took it, and remained in it till the morning. But this did not re-establish the battle, for Régnier having lost fifteen hundred men and eight guns, Oudinot determined on a general retreat, which he conducted in the face of the enemy with great deliberation. The Crown Prince obtained other trophies; Luckau, with a garrison of a thousand French, submitted to his arms on 28th August.

Besides these severe checks on the Prussian frontier, General Girard, in another quarter, had sustained a defeat of some consequence. He had sallied from the garrison of Magdeburg, after the battle of Gross-Beeren, with five or six thousand men. He was encouraged to this movement by the removal of the blockading brigade of Herschberg, who, in obedience to orders, had joined the Crown Prince to oppose the advance of Oudinot. But, after the battle of Gross-Beeren, as the Prussian brigade was returning to renew the blockade of Magdeburg, they encountered Girard and his division near Leibnitz, on 27th August. The French were at first successful, but Czernicheff having thrown himself on them with a large body of Cossacks, Girard's troops gave way, losing six

cannons, fifteen hundred prisoners, and all their baggage.

During this active period, war had been no less busy on the frontiers of Silesia than on those of Bohemia and Brandenburg. Mareschal Macdonald, as already mentioned, had received orders from Napoleon to attack Blucher and his Prussians, who had retired beyond the Katzbach, and occupied a position near a town called Jauer. In obedience to this order, the mareschal had sent General Lauriston, who commanded his right wing, to occupy a position in front of Goldberg, with orders to dispatch a part of his division under General Puthod, to march upon Jauer, by the circuitous route of Schonau. The eleventh corps, which formed the centre of Macdonald's force, crossed the Katzbach at break of day, under his own command, and advanced towards Jauer, up the side of a torrent called the Wuthendé (*i. e.* raging) Neiss. The third corps, under Souham, destined to form the left wing, was to pass the Katzbach near Leibnitz, and then, moving southward, were to come upon the mareschal's left. With this left wing marched the cavalry, under Sébastiani.

It chanced that, on this very 26th of August, Blucher, aware that Buonaparte was engaged at Dresden by the descent of the allies from Bohemia, thought it a good time to seek out

his opponent and fight him. For this purpose, he was in the act of descending the river in order to encounter Macdonald, when the mareschal, on his part, was ascending it, expecting to find him in his position near Jauer.

The stormy weather, so often referred to, with mist and heavy rain, concealed from each other the movements of the two armies, until they met in the fields. They encountered in the plains which extend between Wahlstadt and the Katzbach, but under cirmcustances highly unfavourable to the French mareschal. His right wing was divided from his centre; Lauriston being at Goldberg, and fiercely engaged with the Russian general, Langeron, with whom he had come into contact in the front of that town; and Puthod at a much greater distance from the field of battle. Macdonald's left wing, with the cavalry, was also far in the rear. Blucher allowed no leisure for the junction of these forces. His own cavalry being all in front, and ready for action, charged the French without permitting them leisure to get into position; and when they did, their right wing indeed rested on the Wuthendé-Neiss, but the left, which should have been covered by Sébastiani's cavalry, was altogether unsupported.

Message on message was sent to hasten up the left wing; but a singular fatality prevented both the cavalry and infantry from arriving in

time. Different lines of advance had been pointed out to Souham and Sébastiani; but Souham, hearing the firing, and impatient to place himself on the road which he thought likely to lead him most speedily into action, unluckily adopted that which was appointed for the cavalry. Thus five thousand horse, and five times the number of infantry, being thrown at once on the same line of march, soon confused and embarrassed each other's motions, especially in passing the streets of a village called Kroitsch, a long and narrow defile, which the troops presently crowded to such a degree with foot and horse, baggage and guns, that there was a total impossibility of effecting a passage.

Macdonald, in the mean while, supported his high reputation by the gallantry of his resistance, though charged on the left flank, which these mistakes had left uncovered, by four regiments of cavalry, and by General Karpoff, with a whole cloud of Cossacks. But at length the day was decidedly lost. The French line gave way, and falling back on the Wuthendé-Neiss, now doubly raging from torrents of rain, and upon the Katzbach, they lost a great number of men. As a last resource, Macdonald put himself at the head of the troops, who were at length debouching from the defile of Kroitsch; but they were driven back with great loss, and the skirmish in that

quarter concluded the battle, with great loss to the French.

The evil did not rest here. Lauriston being also under the necessity of retreating across the Katzbach, while Puthod, who had been detached towards Schonau, was left on the right-hand side of that river, this corps was speedily attacked by the enemy, and all who were not killed or taken remained prisoners. The army which Buonaparte destined to act in Silesia, and take Dresden, was, therefore, for the present, completely disabled. The French are admitted to have lost 15,000 men, and more than a hundred guns.

Though the battles of Gross-Beeren and the Katzbach were severe blows to Buonaparte's plan of maintaining himself on the Elbe, he continued obstinate in his determination to keep his ground, with Dresden as his central point of support, and attempted to turn the bad fortune which seemed to haunt his lieutenants (but which in fact arose from their being obliged to attempt great achievements with inadequate means), by appointing Ney to the command of the Northern Army, with strict injunctions to plant his eagles on the walls of Berlin. Accordingly, on the 6th September, Ney took charge of the army which Oudinot had formerly commanded, and which was lying under the walls of Wittenberg, and, in obedience to the Emperor's orders, determined

to advance on the Prussian capital. The enemy (being the army commanded by the Crown Prince) lay rather dispersed upon the grounds more to the east, occupying Juterbock, Belzig, and other villages. Ney was desirous to avoid approaching the quarters of any of them, or to give the least alarm. That mareschal's object was to leave them on the left, and, evading any encounter with the Crown Prince, to throw his force on the road from Torgau to Berlin, and enter into communication with any troops which Buonaparte might dispatch from Dresden upon the same point.

On examining the plan more closely, it was found to comprehend the danger of rousing the Prince of Sweden and his army upon one point, and that was at Dennewitz, the most southern village held by the allies. It was occupied by Tauentzein with a large force, and could not be passed without the alarm being given. Dennewitz might, however, be masked by a sufficient body of troops, under screen of which the mareschal and his main body might push forwards to Dahme, without risking an engagement. It was concluded, that the rapidity of their motions would be so great as to leave no time for the Crown Prince to concentrate his forces for interrupting them.

On the 5th, Ney marched from Wittenberg. On the 6th, the division of Bertrand, destined to mask Dennewitz, formed the left flank of

the army. When they approached the village, Tauentzein, who commanded there, took the alarm, and drew up between Dennewitz and the French division. If Bertrand had only had to maintain himself for a short interval in that dangerous position, it would have been well, and he might have made head against Tauentzein, till the last file of Ney's army had past by; but by some miscalculation (which began to be more common now than formerly among the French officers of the staff), the corps of Bertrand was appointed to march at seven in the morning, while the corps which were to be protected by him did not move till three hours later. Bertrand was thus detained so long in face of the enemy, that his demonstration was converted into an action, his false attack into a real skirmish. Presently after the battle became sharp and serious, and the corps on both sides advancing to sustain them were engaged. Bulow came to support Tauentzein —Régnier advanced to repel Bulow—Guilleminot hastened up on the French side—and Borstel came to support the Russians. However unpremeditated, the battle became general, as if by common consent.

The Prussians suffered heavily from the French artillery, but without giving way. The Swedes and Russians at length came up, and the line of Ney began to yield ground. That general, who had hardly, though all his forces

were engaged, made his post good against the Russians alone, despaired of success when he saw these new enemies appear. He began to retreat; and his first movement in that direction was a signal of flight to the 7th corps, composed chiefly of Saxons not over well inclined to the cause of Napoleon, and who therefore made it no point of honour to fight to the death in his cause. A huge blank was created in the French line by their flight; and the cavalry of the allies rushing in at the gap, the army of Ney was cut into two parts; one of which pushed forwards to Dahme with the mareschal himself; the other, with Oudinot, retreated upon Scharnitz. Ney afterwards accomplished his retreat on Torgau. But the battle of Dennewitz had cost him ten thousand men, forty-three pieces of cannon, and abundance of warlike trophies, relinquished to the adversary, besides the total disappointment of his object in marching towards Berlin.

These repeated defeats, of Gross-Beeren, the Katzbach, and Dennewitz, seemed to intimate that the French were no longer the invincibles they had once been esteemed; or at least, that when they yet worked miracles, it was only when Buonaparte was at their head. Others saw the matter in a different point of view. They said that formerly, when means were plenty with Buonaparte, he took care

that his lieutenants were supplied with forces adequate to the purposes on which they were to be employed. But it was surmised that now he kept the Guard and the *élite* of his forces under his own immediate command, and expected his lieutenants to be as successful with few and raw troops, as they had formerly been with numbers, and veterans. It cannot, however, be said that he saved his own exertions; for during the month of September, while he persisted in maintaining the war in Saxony, although no affair of consequence took place, yet a series of active measures showed how anxious he was to bring the war to a decision under his own eye.

In perusing the brief abstract of movements which follows, the reader will remember, that it was the purpose of Buonaparte to bring the allies to a battle on some point, where, by superior numbers or superior skill, he might obtain a distinguished victory; while, on the other hand, it was the policy of the allies, dreading at once his talents and his despair, to avoid a general action; to lay waste the gound around the points he occupied; restrict his communications; raise Germany in arms around him; and finally, to encompass and hem him in when his ranks were grown thin, and the spirit of his soldiers diminished. Keeping these objects in his eye, the reader, with a single glance at the map, will conceive the mean-

ing of the following movements on either side.

Having deputed to Ney, as we have just seen, the task of checking the progress of the Crown Prince, and taking Berlin if possible, Buonaparte started in person from Dresden on the 3d September, in hopes of fetching a blow at Blucher, whose Cossacks, since the battle of the Katzbach, had advanced eastward, and intercepted a convoy even near Bautzen. But agreeably to the plan adopted at the general head-quarters of the allies, the Prussian veteran fell back and avoided a battle. Meanwhile Napoleon was recalled towards Dresden by the news of the defeat of Ney at Dennewitz, and the yet more pressing intelligence that the allies were on the point of descending into Saxony, and again arraying themselves under the walls of Dresden. The advanced guard of Witgenstein had shown itself, it was said, at Pirna, and the city was a prey to new alarms. The French Emperor posted back towards the Elbe, and on the 9th came in sight of Witgenstein. But the allied generals, afraid of one of those sudden strokes of inspiration, when Napoleon seemed almost to dictate terms to fate, had enjoined Witgenstein to retreat in his turn. The passes of the Erzgebirge received him, and Buonaparte, following him as far as Peterswald, gazed on the spot where Vandamme met his unaccountable defeat, and looked across the valley of Culm to Toplitz,

where his rival Alexander still held his head-quarters. With the glance of an eye, the most expert in military affairs, he saw the danger of involving himself in such impracticable defiles as the valley of Culm, and the roads which communicated with it, and resolved to proceed no farther.

Napoleon, therefore, returned towards Dresden, where he arrived on the 12th September. In his retreat, a trifling skirmish occurred, in which the son of Blucher was wounded, and made prisoner. A victory was claimed on account of this affair, in the bulletin. About the same period Blucher advanced upon the French troops opposed to him, endangered their communications with Dresden, and compelled them to retreat from Bautzen and Neustadt, towards Bischoffswerder and Stolpen. While Buonaparte thought of directing himself northward towards this indefatigable enemy, his attention was of new summoned southward to the Bohemian mountains. Count Lobau, who was placed in observation near Gieshubel, was attacked by a detachment from Schwartzenberg's army. Napoleon hastened to his relief, and made a second attempt to penetrate into these mountain recesses, from which the eagles of the allies made such repeated descents. He penetrated, upon this second occasion, beyond Culm, and as far as Nollendorf, and had a skirmish with the allies, which was

rather unfavourable to him. The action was broken off by one of the tremendous storms which distinguished the season, and Buonaparte again retreated towards Gieshubel. On his return to Dresden, he met the unpleasant news, that the Prince Royal was preparing to cross the Elbe, and that Bulow had opened trenches before Wittenberg; while Blucher, on his side, approached the right bank of the river, and neither Ney nor Macdonald had sufficient force to check their progress.

On the 21st September, Napoleon once again came in person against his veteran enemy, whom he met not far from Hartha; but it was once more in vain. The Prussian field-mareschal was like the phantom knight of the poet. Napoleon, when he advanced to attack him, found no substantial body against which to direct his blows.

The Emperor spent some hours at the miserable thrice-sacked village of Hartha, deliberating, probably, whether he should press on the Crown Prince or Blucher, and disable at least one of these adversaries by a single blow; but deterred by reflecting, that the time necessary for bringing either of them to action would be employed by Schwartzenberg in accomplishing that purpose of seizing Dresden, which his movements had so frequently indicated.

Thus Napoleon could neither remain at

Dresden without suffering the Crown Prince and Blucher to enter Saxony, and make themselves masters of the valley of the Elbe, nor make any distant movement against those generals, without endangering the safety of Dresden, and, with it, of his lines of communication with France. The last, as the more irreparable evil, he resolved to guard against, by retreating to Dresden, which he reached on the 24th. His mareschals had orders to approach closer to the central point, where he himself had his head-quarters; and all the right side of the Elbe was abandoned to the allies. It is said by Baron Odeleben, that the severest orders were issued for destroying houses, driving off cattle, burning woods, and rooting up fruit-trees, reducing the country in short to a desert (an evil reward for the confidence and fidelity of the old King of Saxony); but that they were left unexecuted, partly owing to the humanity of Napoleon's lieutenants, and partly to the rapid advance of the allies. There was little occasion for this additional cruelty; for so dreadfully had these provinces been harassed and pillaged by the repeated passing and repassing of troops on both sides, that grain, cattle, and forage of every kind, were exhausted, and they contained scarce any other sustenance for man or beast, except the potatoe crop, then in the ground.

After his return to Dresden, on the 24th September, Napoleon did not leave it till the period of his final departure; and the tenacity with which he held the place has been compared by some critics to the wilful obstinacy which led to his tarrying so long at Moscow. But the cases were different. We have formerly endeavoured to show, that Napoleon's wisdom in the commencement of this campaign would have been to evacuate Germany, and, by consenting to its liberation, to have diminished the odium attached to his assumption of universal power. As, however, he had chosen to maintain his lofty pretensions at the expense of these bloody campaigns, it was surely prudent to hold Dresden to the last moment. His retreat from it, after so many losses and disappointments, would have decided the defection of the whole Confederation of the Rhine, which already was much to be dreaded. It would have given the allied armies, at present separated from each other, an opportunity to form a junction on the left side of the Elbe, the consequences of which could hardly fail to be decisive of his fate. On the other hand, while he remained at Dresden, Napoleon was in a condition to operate by short marches upon the communications of the allies, and might hope to the last that an opportunity would be afforded him of achieving some signal success against one or other of them, or

perhaps of beating them successively, and in detail. The allied sovereigns and their generals were aware of this, and, therefore, as we have seen, acted upon a plan of extreme caution, for which they have been scoffed at by some French writers, as if it were the result of fear rather than of wisdom. But it was plain that the time for more decisive operations was approaching, and, with a view to such, each party drew towards them such reinforcements as they could command.

Buonaparte's soldiers had suffered much by fatigue and skirmishes, though no important battle had been fought; and he found himself obliged to order Augereau, who commanded about 16,000 men in the neighbourhood of Wurtzberg, to join him at Dresden. He might, however, be said to lose more than he gained by this supply; for the Bavarians, upon whose inclinations to desert the French cause Augereau's army had been a check, no sooner saw it depart, than an open and friendly intercourse took place betwixt their army and that of Austria, which lay opposed to them; negotiations were opened between their courts without much affectation of concealment; and it was generally believed, that only some question about the Tyrol prevented their coming to an immediate agreement.

The allies received, on their side, the reinforcement of no less than 60,000 Russians,

under the command of Bennigsen. The most of them came from the provinces eastward of Moscow; and there were to be seen attending them tribes of the wandering Baskirs and Tartars, figures unknown in European war, wearing sheep-skins, and armed with bows and arrows. But the main body consisted of regular troops, though some bore rather an Asiatic appearance. This was the last reinforcement which the allies were to expect; being the arrière-ban of the almost boundless empire of Russia. Some of the men had travelled from the wall of China to this universal military rendezvous.

Their utmost force being now collected, in numbers greatly superior to that of their adversary, the allies proceeded to execute a joint movement, by means of which they hoped to concentrate their forces on the left bank of the Elbe; so that if Napoleon should persist in remaining at Dresden, he might be cut off from communication with France. With this view Blucher, on the 3d October, crossed the Elbe near the junction of that river with the Schwarze Elster, defeated Bertrand, who lay in an entrenched camp to dispute the passage, and fixed his head-quarters at Duben. At the same time, the Crown Prince of Sweden in like manner transferred his army to the left bank of the Elbe, by crossing at Rosslau, and entered into communication with the Silesian

army. Thus these two great armies were both transferred to the left bank, excepting the division of Tauentzein, which was left to maintain the siege of Wittenberg. Ney, who was in front of these movements, having no means to resist such a preponderating force, retreated to Leipsic.

Simultaneously with the entrance of the Crown Prince and Blucher into the eastern division of Saxony from the north-west, the grand army of the allies was put in motion towards the same district, advancing from the south by Sebastians-Berg and Chemnitz. On the 5th October, the head-quarters of Prince Schwartzenberg were at Marienberg.

These movements instantly showed Buonaparte the measures about to be taken by the allies, and the necessity of preventing their junction. This he proposed to accomplish by leaving Dresden with all his disposable force, attacking Blucher at Duben, and, if possible, annihilating that restless enemy, or, at least, driving him back across the Elbe. At the same time, far from thinking he was about to leave Dresden for ever, which he had been employed to the last in fortifying yet more strongly, he placed a garrison of upwards of 15,000 men in that city under St-Cyr. This force was to defend the city against any corps of the allies, which, left in the Bohemian mountains for that purpose, might otherwise have descended and

occupied Dresden, so soon as Napoleon removed from it. The King of Saxony, his queen and family, preferred accompanying Napoleon on his adventurous journey, to remaining in Dresden, where a siege was to be expected, and where subsistence was already become difficult.

The same alertness of movement, which secured Blucher on other occasions, saved him in the present case from the meditated attack on Duben. On the 9th of October, hearing of Napoleon's approach, he crossed the Mulda, and formed a junction with the army of the Crown Prince, near Zoerbig, on the left bank of that river. Napoleon, once more baffled, took up his head-quarters at Duben on the 10th. Here he soon learned that the Crown Prince and Blucher, apprehensive that he might interpose betwixt them and the Grand Army of Schwartzenberg, had retreated upon the line of the Saale during the night preceding the 11th.—They were thus still placed on his communications, but beyond his reach, and in a situation to communicate with their own Grand Army.

But this movement to the westward, on the part of the allies, had this great inconvenience, that it left Berlin exposed, or inadequately protected by the single division of Tauentzein at Dessan. This did not escape the falcon eye of Napoleon. He laid before his mareschals

a more daring plan of tactics than even his own gigantic imagination had (excepting in the Moscow campaign) ever before conceived. He proposed to recross the Elbe to the right bank, and then resting his right wing on Dresden, and his left on Hamburgh, there to maintain himself, with the purpose of recrossing the Elbe on the first appearance of obtaining a success over the enemy, dashing down on Silesia, and raising the blockade of the fortresses upon the Oder. With this purpose he had already sent Régnier and Bertrand across the Elbe, though their ostensible mission had nothing more important than to raise the siege of Wittenberg.

The counsellors of the Emperor were to a man dissatisfied with this plan. It seemed to them that remaining in Germany was only clinging to the defence of what could no longer be defended. They appealed to the universal disaffection of all the Germans on the Rhine, and to the destruction of the kingdom of Westphalia, recently effected by no greater force than Czernicheff, with a pulk of Cossacks. They noticed the almost declared defection of all their former friends, alluded to their own diminished numbers, and remonstrated against a plan which was to detain the army in a wasted country, inhabited by a population gradually becoming hostile, and surrounded with enemies whom they could not defeat, because

they would never fight but at advantage, and who possessed the means of distressing them, while *they* had no means of retorting the injuries they received. This they said was the history of the last three months, only varied by the decisive defeats of Gross-Beeren, the Katzbach, and Dennewitz.

Napoleon remained from the 11th to the 14th of October at Duben, concentrating his own forces, waiting for news of the allies' motions, and remaining in a state of uncertainty and inactivity, very different from his usual frame of mind and natural habits. « I have seen him at that time, » says an eye-witness,[1] « seated on a sofa beside a table, on which lay his charts, totally unemployed, unless in scribbling mechanically large letters on a sheet of white paper. » Consultations with his best generals, which ended without adopting any fixed determination, varied those unpleasing reveries. The councils were often seasons of dispute, almost of dissension. The want of success had made those dissatisfied with each other, whose friendship had been cemented by uniform and uninterrupted prosperity. Great misfortunes might have bound them together, and compelled them to regard each other as common sufferers. But a suc-

[1] Baron Odeleben, in his interesting Circumstantial Notice of the Campaign in Saxony.

cession of failures exasperated their temper, as a constant drizzling shower is worse to endure than a thunder-storm.

Napoleon, while the mareschals were dissatisfied with each other and with him, complained, on his part, that fatigue and discouragement had overpowered most of his principal officers; that they had become indifferent, lukewarm, awkward, and therefore unfortunate. «The general officers,» he said, «desired nothing but repose, and that at all rates.»

On the other hand, the mareschals asserted that Napoleon no longer calculated his means to the ends which he proposed to attain—that he suffered himself to be deceived by phrases about the predominance of his star and his destiny--and ridiculed his declaration that the word Impossible was not good French. They said that such phrases were well enough to encourage soldiers; but that military councils ought to be founded on more logical arguments. They pleaded guilty of desiring repose; but asked which was to blame, the horse or the rider, when the over-ridden animal broke down with fatigue?

At length Napoleon either changed his own opinion, or deferred to that of his military advisers; the orders to Régnier and Bertrand to advance upon Berlin were annulled, and the retreat upon Leipsic was resolved upon. The

loss of three days had rendered the utmost dispatch necessary, and Buonaparte saw himself obliged to leave behind him in garrison, Davoust at Hamburgh, Lemarrois at Magdeburg, Lapoype at Wittenberg, and Count Narbonne at Torgau. Still he seems to have anticipated some favourable chance, which might again bring him back to the line of the Elbe. « A thunderbolt,» as he himself expressed it, « alone could save him; but all was not lost while battle was in his power, and a single victory might restore Germany to his obedience.»

CHAPTER XXI.

Napoleon reaches Leipsic on 15th of October.—Description of that town.—Statement of the French and Allied Forces.—BATTLE OF LEIPSIC, commenced on 16th, and terminates with disadvantage to the French at nightfall. —Napoleon dispatches General Mehrfeldt (his prisoner) to the Emperor of Austria, with proposals for an Armistice.—No answer is returned.—The battle is renewed on the morning of the 18th, and lasts till night, when the French are compelled to retreat, after immense loss on both sides.—They evacuate Leipsic on the 19th, the Allies in full pursuit —The retreat rendered more bloody by the blowing up of one of the bridges.—Prince Poniatowski drowned in the Elster.—25,000 French are made prisoners.—The Allied Sovereigns meet in triumph, at noon, in the Great Square at Leipsic.—King of Saxony sent under a guard to Berlin.—Reflections.

THE last act of the grand drama, so far as the scene lay in Germany, was now fast approaching.

During the two first weeks of October, the various movements of the troops had been o an indecisive character; but after the 14th when the belligerent powers became aware of each other's plans, the corps of the allies, as well as those of the French, streamed towards Leipsic as to a common centre.

Leaving Duben, the Emperor reached Leipsic early on the 15th of October, and received the agreeable information that his whole force would be in twenty-four hours under the walls; that the Grand Army of Austria was fast approaching; but that his demonstration against Berlin had alarmed Blucher, and therefore that mareschal might be longer of advancing, from his anxiety to protect the Prussian capital. An opportunity of fighting the one army, without the presence of the other, was what Napoleon most anxiously desired,

In the mean time cannon were heard, and shortly after Murat brought an account of a desperate cavalry skirmish, in which each party claimed the victory. He himself, marked by the splendour of his dress, had with difficulty escaped from a young Prussian officer, who was killed by an orderly dragoon that waited upon the King of Naples. Another remarkable circumstance in this skirmish was, the distinguished behaviour of a Prussian regiment of cuirassiers. When complimented on their behaviour, they replied, « Could we do otherwise?—this is the anniversary of the battle of Jena.» Such a spirit prevailed among the allies, nor is it to be supposed that that of the French was inferior. If the one had wrongs to avenge, the other had honours to preserve.

The venerable town of Leipsic forms an irregular square, surrounded by an ancient Go-

thic wall, with a terrace planted with trees. Four gates,—on the north those of Halle and Rastadt, on the east the gate of Grimma, and on the south that called Saint Peter's gate,—lead from the town to the suburbs, which are of great extent, secured by walls and barriers. Upon the west side of the town, two rivers, the Pleisse and the Elster, wash its walls, and, flowing through meadows, divide themselves into several branches, connected by marshy islands. Leipsic cannot, therefore, be esteemed capable of approach by an enemy in that direction, excepting by a succession of bridges which cross those rivers and their connecting streams. The first of these bridges leads to a village called Lindenau, and thence to Mark-Rastadt. It is close to the gate of the city which takes its name from that village. This road forms the sole communication betwixt Leipsic and the banks of the Rhine. On the east side, the river Partha makes a large semicircular bend around the city, inclosing extensive plains, with various heights and points of elevation, which make it well adapted for a military position; on the south the same species of ground continues, but more broken into eminences, one of which is called the Swedish Camp, from the wars, doubtless, of Gustavus Adolphus; another is called the Sheepwalk of Meusdorf; it is then bounded by the banks of the Pleisse. This line is marked by a va-

riety of villages, which, in the fearful days which we are now to describe, gained a name in history. About the village of Connewitz begins the marshy ground, inundated by the Pleisse and Elster.

It was on this last line that, on the 15th October, the columns of the Grand Army of the allies were seen hastily advancing. Napoleon immediately made his arrangements for defence. Lindenau, through which ran the Mark-Rastadt road, by which the French must retreat, was occupied by Bertrand. Poniatowski, advancing to the right bank of the Pleisse, held all the villages along the side of the river—Connewitz, Löfsnig, Dooblitz, and so on to Markleberg. As the line of defence swept to the eastward, Augereau was established on the elevated plain of Wachau. He was supported by Victor and Lauriston at a considerable village called Liebertwolkowitz. Cavalry were posted on the wings of these divisions. The Imperial Guards were placed in the rear as a reserve, at a village named Probtsheyda; and Macdonald occupied a gentle and sweeping rising ground, extending from Stœtteritz to Holtzhausen.

On the opposite, that is, the northern side of the city, Marmont occupied a line betwixt Mœckern and Euterizt. His troops were intended to make head against Blucher, whose approach from the north was momentarily to

be apprehended. Almost all along the ground thus defended, but especially on the south front, the allies had prepared columns of attack; and the sentinels of both armies were, when evening fell, in some places within musket-shot of each other. Neither side, however, seemed willing to begin the battle, in which the great question was to be decided, whether France should leave other nations to be guided by their own princes, or retain the unnatural supremacy with which she had been invested by the talents of one great soldier.

The number of men who engaged the next morning, was said to be 136,000 French, omitting the corps of Souham, who was not engaged, and of Régnier, who was not yet come up. The allies are by the same accounts rated at 230,000, without counting the division of the Crown Prince, or that of Bennigsen, which had not as yet joined. Almost all the statements assign a predominating force to the allies of 80,000 or 100,000 men superior to their enemy. It thus appears that they had at last acted according to Napoleon's own idea of the art of war, which he defined as the art of assembling the greatest number upon a given point.

Napoleon himself visited all the posts, gave his last orders, and took the opportunity, as he frequently did on the eve of battle, to dis-

tribute eagles to those regiments of Augereau's division, which, being new levies, had not yet received these military emblems. The ceremony, performed with warlike pomp, may remind the reader of the ancient fashion of making knights on the eve of a battle. The soldiers were made to swear never to abandon their eagles; and the Emperor concluded by saying, in a loud voice, « Yonder lies the enemy. Swear that you will rather die than permit France to be dishonoured.»

« We swear it,» exclaimed the battalions. « Long live the Emperor!» And unquestionably they kept their word in the tremendous series of actions which followed.

Napoleon's preparations were made chiefly upon the southern side of Leipsic. It has been supposed, though, we think, with small probability, that he scarce expected a serious attack upon the northern side at all. In the evening, however, of the 15th, three death-rockets (*feux de mort*), displaying long brilliant trains of white light, were observed to rise high in the southerly quarter of the heavens, and they were presently answered by four of a red colour, which were seen in the distant north. It was concluded that these were signals of communication between the Grand Army of the allies, and those of the Crown Prince and Blucher. The latter, therefore, must be at no incalculable distance.

Napoleon remained in the rear of his own

Guards, behind the central position, almost opposite to a village called Gossa, which was occupied by the allies.

At break of day, on the 16th October, the battle began. The French position was attacked along all the southern front with the greatest fury. On the French right, the village of Markleberg was fiercely assaulted by Kleist, while the Austrian division of Mehrfeldt, making their way through the marshes to the left bank of the Pleisse, threatened to force themselves across that river. Poniatowski, to whom the defence was confided, was obliged to give ground, so that the Emperor was compelled to bring up the troops under Souham, which had joined during the night, and which had been designed to support Marmont on the north of Leipsic. Mareschal Victor defended the village of Wachau, in front of the position, against Prince Eugène of Wirtemberg. The town of Liebertwolkowitz was made good by Lauriston against Klénau. The allies made six desperate attempts on these points, but all were unsuccessful. They were now something in the condition of wrestlers who have exhausted themselves in vain and premature efforts; and Napoleon in turn, assuming the offensive, began to show his skill and power.

Macdonald was ordered to attack Klénau, and beat him back from Liebertwolkowitz, with the cavalry of Sébastiani; while two divi-

sions descended to sustain General Lauriston. It was about noon when this general advance took place along the centre of the French. It was for some time fearfully successful. The village of Gossa, hitherto occupied by the allies, and in the very centre of their line, was carried by the bayonet. The eminence called the Sheepwalk was also in danger of being lost, and the exertions of Macdonald put him in possession of the redoubt called the Swedish Camp. The desperate impetuosity of the French had fairly broken through the centre of the allies; and Napoleon, as if desirous not to lose a moment in proclaiming his supposed victory, sent the tidings to the King of Saxony, who commanded all the church-bells in the city to be rung for rejoicing, even while the close continued roar of the cannon seemed to give the lie to the merry peal. The King of Naples, in the mean time, with Latour Maubourg, and Kellermann, poured through the gap in the enemy's centre, and at the head of the whòle body of cavalry thundered forward as far as Magdeburg, a village in the rear of the allies, bearing down General Rayefskoi, with the grenadiers of the reserve, who threw themselves forward to oppose their passage.

But at this imminent moment of peril, while the French cavalry were disordered by their own success, Alexander ordered the Cossacks of his Guard, who were in attendance on his person, to charge. They did so with the ut-

most fury, as fighting under the eye of their sovereign, disconcerted Buonaparte's manœuvre, and bore back with their long lances the dense mass of cavalry who had so nearly carried the day.

In the mean time, when the carnage was continuing on the southern side of Leipsic, a similar thunder of artillery commenced on the right, where Blucher had arrived before the city, and suddenly come into action with Marmont, with at least three men for one. Breathless aides-de-camp came galloping to reclaim the troops of Souham, which, for the purpose of supporting Poniatowski, had been withdrawn from their original destination of assisting Marmont. They could not, however, be replaced, and Blucher obtained, in consequence, great and decided results. He took the village of Mœckern, with twenty pieces of artillery, and two thousand prisoners; and when night separated the combat, had the advantage of having greatly narrowed the position of the enemy.

But the issue on the south side of Leipsic continued entirely indecisive, though furiously contested. Gossa was still disputed, taken and retaken repeatedly, but at length remained in possession of the allies. On the verge of the Pleisse, the combat was no less dreadful. The Austrians of Bianchi's division poured on Markleberg, close to the side of the river, with the most dreadful yells. Poniatowski, with

Augereau's assistance, had the utmost difficulty in keeping his ground. From the left side of the Pleisse, Schwartzenberg manœuvred to push a body of horse across the swampy river, to take the French in the rear of the position. But such of the cavalry as got through a very bad ford were instantly charged and driven back, and their leader, General Mehrfeldt, fell into the hands of the French. An Austrian division, that of Giulay, manœuvred on the left bank of the Pleisse, as far down as Lindenau, and the succession of bridges, which, we have said, forms on the western side the sole exit from Leipsic towards the Rhine. This was the only pass which remained for retreat to the French, should they fail in the dreadful action which was now fighting. Giulay might have destroyed these bridges; but it is believed he had orders to leave open that pass for retreat, lest the French should be rendered utterly desperate, when there was no anticipating what exertions they might be goaded to.

The battle, thus fiercely contested, continued to rage till nightfall, when the bloody work ceased as if by mutual consent. Three cannon-shot, fired as a signal to the more distant points, intimated that the conflict was ended for the time, and the armies on the southern line retired to rest, in each other's presence, in the very positions which they had occupied the night before. The French had lost the

ground which at one period they had gained, but they had not relinquished one foot of their original position, though so fiercely attacked during the whole day by greatly superior numbers. On the north their defence had been less successful. Marmont had been forced back by Blucher, and the whole line of defence on that side was crowded more near to the walls of Leipsic.

Napoleon, in the mean time, had the melancholy task of arranging his soldiers for a defence, sure to be honourable, and yet at length to be unavailing. Retreat became inevitable; yet, how to accomplish it through the narrow streets of a crowded city; how to pass more than one hundred thousand men over a single bridge, while double that number were pressing on their rear, was a problem which even Buonaparte could not solve. In this perplexity, he thought of appealing to the sentiments of affection which the Emperor of Austria must necessarily be supposed to entertain for his daughter and grandchild. The capture of General Mehrfeldt served opportunely to afford the means of communication with the better grace, as, after the battle of Austerlitz, this was the individual, who, on the part of the Emperor of Germany, had solicited a personal interview, and favourable terms from Napoleon. In a private interview with this officer, Napoleon

received the confirmation of what he had long apprehended, the defection of the King of Bavaria, the union of his army with that of Austria, and their determination to intercept him on his return to the Rhine. This fatal intelligence increased his desire of peace, and he requested, yet in terms of becoming dignity, the intercession of his father-in-law. He was now willing to adopt the terms proposed at Prague. He offered to renounce Poland and Illyria. He would consent to the independence of Holland, the Hans towns, and Spain; but he wished this last to be delayed till a general peace. Italy, he proposed, should be considered as independent, and preserved in its integrity. Lastly, as the price of the armistice to be immediately concluded, he was willing to evacuate Germany and retreat towards the Rhine.

These terms contained what, at an early part of the campaign, and voluntarily tendered, would have been gladly accepted by the allies. But Buonaparte's own character for ability and pertinacity; the general impression, that, if he relinquished his views for a time, it was only to recur to them in a more favourable season; and his terrible power of making successful exertions for that purpose, hardened the hearts of the allied sovereigns against what, from another (could any other save Buonaparte be supposed in his situation) would, in the like circumstances, have been favourably received.

«Adieu, General Mehrfeldt,» said Napoleon, dismissing his prisoner; «when, on my part, you name the word armistice to the two Emperors, I doubt not that the voice which then strikes their ears will awaken many recollections.» Words affecting by their simplicity, and which, coming from so proud a heart, and one who was reduced to ask the generosity which he had formerly extended, cannot be recorded without strong sympathy.

General Mehrfeldt went out, like the messenger from the ark, and long and anxiously did Buonaparte expect his return. But he was the raven envoy, and brought back no olive-branch. Napoleon did not receive an answer until his troops had re-crossed the Rhine. The allies had engaged themselves solemnly to each other, that they would enter into no treaty with him while an individual of the French army remained in Germany.

Buonaparte was now engaged in preparations for retreat; yet he made them with less expedition than the necessities of the time required. Morning came, and the enemy did not renew the attack, waiting for Bennigsen and the Prince Royal of Sweden. In the mean while, casks, and materials of all kinds being plenty, and labourers to be collected to any extent, it seems, that, by some of the various modes known to military engineers,[1] tempo-

[1] See Sir Howard Douglas's work on military Bridges.

rary bridges might have been thrown over the Elster and the Pleisse, which are tranquil, still rivers, and the marshes betwixt them rendered sufficiently passable.' 'Under far more disadvantageous circumstances Napoleon had bridged the Beresina within the space of twelve hours.' This censure is confirmed by a most competent judge, the general of engineers, Rogniat, who affirms that there was time enough to have completed six bridges, had it been employed with activity. The answer, that he himself, as chief of the engineer department at the time, ought to have ordered and prepared these means of retreat, seems totally insufficient. Napoleon did not permit his generals to anticipate his commands on such important occasions. It is said, indeed, that the Emperor had given orders for three bridges, but that, in the confusion of this dreadful period, that was seldom completely accomplished which Napoleon could not look after with his own eyes. Nothing of the kind was actually attempted, except at a place called the Judges' Garden; and that, besides having its access, like the stone bridge, through the town of Leipsic, was constructed of too slight materials. Perhaps Napoleon trusted to the effect of Mehrfeldt's mission; perhaps he had still latent hopes that his retreat might be unnecessary; perhaps he abhorred the thought of that manœuvre so much, as to lead him

entirely to confide the necessary preparations to another; but certain it is, the exertion was not made in a manner suitable to the occasion. The village of Lindenau, on the left side of the rivers, was nevertheless secured.

The 17th, as we have said, was spent in preparations on both sides, without any actual hostilities, excepting when a distant cannonade, like the growling of some huge monster, showed that war was only slumbering, and that but lightly.

At eight o'clock on the 18th of October, the battle was renewed with tenfold fury. Napoleon had considerably contracted his circuit of defence; on the external range of heights and villages, which had been so desperately defended on the 16th, the allies now found no opposition but that of outposts. The French were posted in an interior line nearer to Leipsic, of which Probtsheyda was the central point. Napoleon himself, stationed on an eminence called Thonberg, commanded a prospect of the whole field. Masses were drawn up behind the villages, which relieved their defenders from time to time with fresh troops; cannon were placed in their front and on their flanks, and every patch of wooded ground which afforded the least shelter was filled with tirailleurs. The battle then joined on all sides. The Poles, with their gallant general, Poniatowski, to whom this was to prove the last of his fields, defended the banks of the

Pleisse, and the villages connected with it, against the Prince of Hesse Homberg, Bianchi, and Colleredo. In the centre, Barclay de Tolly, Witgenstein, and Kleist, advanced on Probtsheyda, where they were opposed by the King of Naples, Victor, Augereau, and Lauriston, under the eye of Napoleon himself. On the left, Macdonald had drawn back his division from an advanced point called Holtzhausen, to a village called Stœtteritz, which was the post assigned to him on the new and restricted line of defence. Along all this extended southern line, the fire continued furious on both sides, nor could the terrified spectators, from the walls and steeples of Leipsic, perceive that it either advanced or recoiled. The French had the advantage of situation and cover, the allies that of greatly superior numbers; both were commanded by the first generals of their country and age.

About two o'clock afternoon, the allies, under General Pirch and Prince Augustus of Prussia, forced their way headlong into Probtsheyda; the camp-followers began to fly; the noise of the tumult overcame almost the fire of the artillery. Napoleon, in the rear, but yet on the verge of this tumult, preserved his entire tranquillity. He placed the reserve of the Old Guard in order, led them in person to recover the village, and saw them force their entrance, ere he retreated to the eminence from which

he observed the action. During the whole of this eventful day, in which he might be said to fight less for victory than for safety, this wonderful man continued calm, decided, collected, and supported his diminished and broken squadrons in their valiant defence, with a presence of mind and courage, as determined as he had so often exhibited in directing the tide of onward victory. Perhaps his military talents were more to be admired, when thus contending at once against Fortune and the superiority of numbers, than in the most distinguished of his victories, when the fickle goddess fought upon his side.

The allies, notwithstanding their gallantry and their numbers, felt themselves obliged to desist from the murderous attacks upon the villages which cost them such immense loss; and drawing back their troops as they brought forward their guns and howitzers, contented themselves with maintaining a dreadful fire on the French masses as they showed themselves, and throwing shells into the villages. The French replied with great spirit; but they had fewer guns in position, and besides, their ammunition was falling short. Still, however, Napoleon completely maintained the day on the south of Leipsic, where he was present in person.

On the north side of Leipsic, the superiority of numbers, still greater than that which exist-

ed on the south, placed Ney in a precarious situation. He was pressed at once by the army of Blucher, and by that of the Crown Prince, which was now come up in force. The latter general forced his way across the Partha, with three columns, and at three different points; and Ney saw himself obliged to retreat, in order to concentrate his forces nearer Leipsic, and communicate by his right with the army of Napoleon.

The Russians had orders to advance to force this new position, and particularly to drive back the advanced guard of Régnier, stationed on an eminence called Heiterblick, betwixt the villages of Taucha and Paunsdorf. On a sudden, the troops who occupied the French line on that point came forward to meet the allies, with their swords sheathed, and colours of truce displayed. This was a Saxon brigade, who, in the midst of the action, embraced the time and opportunity to desert the service of Napoleon, and declare for independence. These men had an unquestionable right to espouse the cause of their country, and shake off the yoke of a stranger, which Saxony had found so burdensome; but it is not while on the actual battle-ground that one side ought to be exchanged for the other; and those must be in every case accounted guilty of treachery, who, bringing their swords into the field for one party, shall suddenly, and without intima-

tion given, turn them against the power in whose ranks they had stood.

The Russians, afraid of stratagem, sent the Saxon troops, about ten thousand in number, to the rear of the position. But their artillery were immediately brought into action; and having expended during that morning one half of their ammunition on the allies, they now bestowed the other half upon the French army. By this unexpected disaster, Ney was obliged to contract his line of defence once more. Even the valour and exertions of that distinguished general could not defend Schœnfeld. That fair village forms almost one of the northern suburbs of Leipsic. It was in vain that Buonaparte dispatched his reserves of cavalry to check the advance of the Crown Prince. He defeated all opposition that presented itself, and pressed Ney into a position close under the walls of Leipsic. The battle once more ceased on all points; and after the solemn signal of three cannon-shot had been heard, the field was left to the slain and the wounded.

Although the French army kept its ground most valiantly during the whole of this tremendous day, there was no prospect of their being able to sustain themselves any longer around or in Leipsic. The allies had approached so close to them, that their attacks might, on the third day, be expected to be more com-

bined and simultaneous than before. The superiority of numbers became more efficient after the great carnage that had taken place, and that for the simple reason, that the army which had greatest numbers could best afford to lose lives. It is said also by Baron Fain, that the enormous number of 250,000 cannon-bullets had been expended by the French during the last four days, and that there only remained to serve their guns about 16,000 cartridges, which could scarce support a hot fire for two hours. This was owing to the great park of artillery having been directed on Torgau, another circumstance which serves to show how little Buonaparte dreamed of abandoning the Elbe when he moved from Dresden. To this the increasing scarcity of provisions is to be added; so that every thing combined to render Napoleon's longer stay at Dresden altogether impossible, especially when the Bavarian general, now his declared enemy, was master of his communications with France.

The retreat, however necessary, was doomed inevitably to be disastrous, as is evident from the situation of the French army, cooped up by superior forces under the walls of a large town, the narrow streets of which they must traverse to reach two bridges, one of recent and hasty construction, by which they must cross the Pleisse, the Elster, and the marshy ground, streams, and canals, which divide

them from each other; and then, added to this was the necessity of the whole army debouching by one single road, that which leads to Lindenau, and on which it would be impossible to prevent dreadful confusion. But there was no remedy for these evils; they must necessarily be risked.

The retreat was commenced in the night time, and Buonaparte, retiring in person to Leipsic, spent a third exhausting night in dictating the necessary orders for drawing the corps of his army successively within the town, and transferring them to the western bank of the two rivers. The French troops accordingly came into Leipsic from all sides, and filling the town with the ineffable confusion which always must attend the retreat of so large a body in the presence of a victorious enemy, they proceeded to get out of it as they best could, by the way prescribed. Macdonald, and Poniatowski, with their corps, were appointed to the perilous honour of protecting the rear.

« Prince, » said Napoleon, to the brave Polish prince, « you must defend the southern suburb. »

« Alas, Sire, » he answered, « I have but few soldiers left. »

« Well, but you will defend them with what you have? »

« Doubt not, Sire, but that we will make good

our ground; we are all ready to die for your Majesty's service.»

Napoleon parted with this brave and attached prince, upon whom he had recently bestowed a mareschal's baton. They never met again in this world.

The arrival of day-light had no sooner shown to the allies the commencement of the French retreat, than their columns began to advance in pursuit on every point, pushing forward, with all the animation of victory, to overtake the enemy in the suburbs and streets of Leipsic. The King of Saxony, the magistrates, and some of the French generals, endeavoured to secure the city from the dangers which were to be expected from a battle in the town, betwixt the rear-guard of the French and the advanced guard of the allies. They sent proposals, that the French army should be permitted to effect their retreat unmolested, in mercy to the unfortunate town. But when were victorious generals prevented from prosecuting military advantages, by the mere consideration of humanity? Napoleon, on his side, was urged to set fire to the suburbs, to check the pressure of the allies on his rear-guard. As this, however, must have occasioned a most extensive scene of misery, Buonaparte generously refused to give such a dreadful order, which, besides, could not have been executed without compromising the safety of

a great part of his own rear, to whom the task of destruction must have been committed, and who would doubtless immediately have engaged in an extensive scene of plunder. Perhaps, also, Napoleon might be influenced by the feeling of what was due to the confidence and fidelity of Frederick Augustus of Saxony, who, having been so long the faithful follower of his fortunes, was now to be abandoned to his own. To have set fire to that unhappy monarch's city, when leaving him behind to make terms for himself as he could, would have been an evil requital for all he had done and suffered in the cause of France; nor would it have been much better had Napoleon removed the Saxon King from his dominions, and destroyed all chance of his making peace with the irritated sovereigns, by transporting him along with the French army, in its calamitous retreat.

At nine o'clock Napoleon had a farewell interview with Frederick Augustus, releasing him formally from all the ties which had hitherto combined them, and leaving him at liberty to form such other alliances as the safety of his states might require. Their parting scene was hurried to a conclusion by the heavy discharge of musketry from several points, which intimated that the allies, forcing their way into the suburbs, were fighting hand to hand, and from house to house,

with the French, who still continued to defend them. The King and Queen of Saxony conjured Buonaparte to mount his horse, and make his escape; but, before he did so, he discharged from their ties to France and to himself the King of Saxony's body-guard, and left them for the protection of the royal family.

When Napoleon attempted to make his way to the single point of exit, by the gate of Rastadt, which led to the bridge, or succession of bridges, so often mentioned, he found reason for thinking his personal safety in actual danger. It must be remembered, that the French army, still numbering nearly 100,000 were pouring into Leipsic, pursued by more than double that number, and that the streets were encumbered with the dead and wounded, with artillery and baggage, with columns so wedged up that it was impossible for them to get forward, and with others, who, almost desperate of their safety, would not be left behind. To fight his way through this confusion, was impossible even for Napoleon. He and his suite were obliged to give up all attempts to proceed in the direct road to the bridge, and, turning in the other direction, he got out of the city through Saint Peter's Gate, moved on until he was in sight of the advancing columns of the allies, then turning along the eastern suburb, he found a circuitous by-

way to the bridges, and was enabled to get across. But the temporary bridge which we have before mentioned had already given way, so that there remained only the old bridge on the road to Lindenau, to serve as an exit to the whole French army. The furious defence which was maintained in the suburbs, continued to check the advance of the allies, otherwise the greater part of the French army must inevitably have been destroyed. But the defenders, themselves, with their brave commanders, were at length, after exhibiting prodigies of valour, compelled to retreat; and ere they could reach the banks of the river, a dreadful accident had taken place.

The bridge, so necessary to the escape of this distressed army, had been mined by Buonaparte's orders, and an officer of engineers was left to execute the necessary measure of destroying it, so soon as the allies should approach in force sufficient to occupy the pass. Whether the officer to whom this duty was intrusted had fled, or had fallen, or had been absent from his post by accident, no one seems to have known; but at this critical period a sergeant commanded the sappers in his stead. A body of Swedish sharp-shooters pushed up the side of the river about eleven o'clock, with loud cries and huzzas, firing upon the crowds who were winning their way

slowly along the bridge, while Cossacks and Hulans were seen on the southern side, rushing towards the same spot; and the troops of Saxony and Baden, who had now entirely changed sides, were firing on the French from the wall of the suburbs, which they had been posted to defend against the allies, and annoying the retreat which they had been destined to cover. The non-commissioned officer of engineers imagined that the retreat of the French was cut off, and set fire to the mine, that the allies might not take possession of the bridge for pursuing Napoleon.[1] The bridge exploded with a horrible noise.

This catastrophe effectually intercepted the retreat of all who remained still on the Leipsic side of the river, excepting some individuals who succeeded by swimming through the Pleisse and the Elster. Among these was the brave Mareschal Macdonald, who surmounted all the obstacles opposed to his escape. Poniatowski, the gallant nephew of Stanislaus, King

[1] This story was at first doubted, and it was supposed that Napoleon had commanded the bridge to be blown up, with the selfish purpose of securing his own retreat. But, from all concurring accounts, the explosion took place in the manner, and from the cause, mentioned in the text. There is, notwithstanding, an obscurity in the case. A French officer of engineers, by name Colonel Montfort, was publicly announced as the person, through whose negligence or treachery the post was left to subordinate keeping. Nevertheless, it is said, that the only officer of

of Poland, was less fortunate. He was the favourite of his countrymen, who saw in their imagination the crown of Poland glittering upon his brow. He himself, like most of the Poles of sense and reflection, regarded these hopes as delusive; but followed Napoleon with unflinching zeal, because he had always been his friend and benefactor. Besides a thousand other acts of valour, Poniatowski's recent defence of the extreme right of the French position was as brilliant as any part of the memorable resistance at Leipsic. He had been twice wounded in the previous battles. Seeing the bridge destroyed, and the enemy's forces thronging forward in all directions, he drew his sabre, and said to his suite, and a few Polish cuirassiers, who followed him, « Gentlemen, it is better to fall with honour than to surrender.» He charged accordingly, and pushed through the troops of the allied army opposed to him, in the course of which de-

that name, in the engineer service of Buonaparte's army, was actually at Mentz when the battle of Leipsic took place. This is alluded to by General Grouchy, who, in a note upon his interesting Observations on General Gourgaud's Account of the Campaign of 1815, has this remarkable passage:—« One would wish to forget the bulletin, which, after the battle of Leipsic, delivered to the bar of public opinion, as preliminary to bringing him before a military commission, Colonel Montfort of the engineer service, gratuitously accused of the breaking down the bridge at Leipsic.» Neither the Colonel nor the non-commissioned officer were ever brought to a court-martial.

sperate attempt he was wounded by a musket-shot in the arm. Other enemies appeared; he threw himself upon them with the same success, making his way amongst them also, after receiving a wound through the cross of his decoration. He then plunged into the Pleisse, and with the assistance of his staff-officers, got across that river, in which his horse was lost. Though much exhausted, he mounted another horse, and seeing that the enemy were already occupying the banks of the Elster with riflemen, he plunged into that deep and marshy river, to rise no more. Thus bravely died a prince, who, in one sense, may be termed the last of the Poles.[1]

The remainder of the French army, after many had been killed and drowned in an attempt to cross these relentless rivers, received quarter from the enemy. About 25,000 men were made prisoners, and as Napoleon seems only to have had about 200 guns at the battle of Hanau, many must have been abandoned in Leipsic and its neighbourhood. The quantity of baggage taken was immense.

The triumph of the allied monarchs was complete. Advancing at the head of their victorious forces, each upon his own side, the

[1] His body was found, and his obsequies performed with great military pomp; both the victors and vanquished attending him to the tomb, with every honour which could be rendered to his remains.

Emperor of Russia, the King of Prussia, and the Crown Prince of Sweden, met and greeted each other in the great square of the city, where they were soon joined by the Emperor of Austria. General Bertrand, the French commandant of the city, surrendered his sword to these illustrious personages. No interview took place between the allied monarchs and the King of Saxony. He was sent under a guard of Cossacks to Berlin, nor was he afterwards restored to his throne, until he had paid a severe fine for his adherence to France.

When reflecting upon these scenes, the rank and dignity of the actors naturally attract our observation. It seems as if the example of Buonaparte, in placing himself at the head of his armies, had in some respects changed the condition of sovereigns, from the reserved and retired dignity in which most had remained, estranged from the actual toils of government and dangers of war, into the less abstracted condition of sharing the risk of battle, and the labours of negotiation. Such scenes as those which passed at Leipsic on this memorable day, whether we look at the parting of Napoleon from Frederick Augustus, amid the firing and shouting of hostile armies, or the triumphant meeting of the allied sovereigns in the great square of Leipsic, had been for centuries only to be paralleled in romance. But considering how important it is to the people that sove-

reigns should not be prompt to foster a love of war, there is great room for question whether the encouragement of this warlike propensity be upon the whole a subject for Europe to congratulate itself upon.

Policy and the science of war alike dictated a rapid and close pursuit after the routed French; but the allied army had been too much exhausted by the efforts required to gain the battle, to admit of its deriving the full advantage from success. There was a great scarcity of provisions around Leipsic; and the stores of the city, exhausted by the French, afforded no relief. The bridge which had been destroyed was as necessary for the advance of the allies as the retreat of Napoleon. Besides, it must be admitted that an allied army is always less decided and rapid in its movements than one which receives all its impulses from a single commander of strong and vigorous talents. Of this we shall see more proofs. But in the mean time, a great point was gained. The liberation of Germany was complete, even if Napoleon should escape the united armies of Austria and Bavaria, which lay still betwixt him and the banks of the Rhine. And indeed the battles which he fought for conquest terminated at Leipsic. Those which he afterwards waged were for his own life and the sceptre of France.

CHAPTER XXII.

Details of the Retreat of the French from Germany.—General Defection of Napoleon's Partisans.—Battle of Hanau fought on 30th and 31st October—in which the French are successful—They prosecute their retreat.—Napoleon arrives at Paris on 9th November—State in which he finds the public mind in the Capital.—Fate of the French Garrisons left in Germany.—Arrival of the Allied Armies on the banks of the Rhine—Their exultation, which is universal throughout Germany.—The Allies halt on the Rhine.—General view of Napoleon's political relations at the present period.—Italy—Spain.—Restoration of Ferdinand.—Liberation of the Pope, who returns to Rome.—Emancipation of Holland.

Napoleon was now on his retreat, and it proved a final one, from Germany towards France. It was performed with disorder enough, and great loss, though far less than that which had attended the famous departure from Moscow. The troops, according to Baron Odeleben, soured by misfortune, marched with a fierce and menacing air, and the Guards in particular indulged in every excess. In this disordered condition, Napoleon passed through Lutzen,

late the scene of his brilliant success, now witness to his disastrous losses. His own courage was unabated; he seemed indeed pensive, but was calm and composed, indulging in no vain regrets, still less in useless censures and recriminations. Harassed as he passed the defiles of Eckartsberg, by the light troops of the allies, he pushed on to Erfurt, where he hoped to be able to make some pause, and restore order to his disorganized followers.

On the 23d of October, he reached that city, which was rendered by its strong citadel a convenient rallying point; and upon collecting the report of his losses, had the misfortune to find them much greater than he had apprehended. Almost all the German troops of his army were now withdrawn from it. The Saxons and the troops of Baden he had dismissed with a good grace; other contingents, which saw their sovereigns on the point of being freed from Napoleon's supremacy, withdrew of themselves, and in most cases joined the allies. A great many of those Frenchmen who arrived at Erfurt were in a miserable condition, and without arms. Their wretched appearance extorted from Buonaparte the peevish observation, « They are a set of scoundrels, who are going to the devil!—In this way I shall lose 80,000 men before I can get to the Rhine. »

The spirit of defection extended even to those who were nearest to the Emperor. Mu-

rat, discouraged and rendered impatient by the incessant misfortunes of his brother-in-law, took leave, under pretence, it was said, of bringing forces up from the French frontier, but in reality to return to his own dominions, without further allying his fortunes to those of Napoleon. Buonaparte, as if influenced by some secret presentiment that they should never again meet, embraced his old companion in arms repeatedly ere they parted.

The Poles who remained in Napoleon's army showed a very generous spirit. He found himself obliged to appeal to their own honour, whether they chose to remain in his service, or to desert him at this crisis. A part had served so long under his banners, that they had become soldiers of fortune, to whom the French camp served for a native country. But many others were men who had assumed arms in the Russian campaign, with the intention of freeing Poland from the foreign yoke under which it had so long groaned. The manner in which Napoleon had disappointed their hopes could not be forgotten by them; but they had too much generosity to revenge, at this crisis, the injustice with which they had been treated, and agreed unanimously that they would not quit Napoleon's service until they had escorted him safely beyond the Rhine, reserving their right then to leave his standard,

of which a great many accordingly availed themselves.

Napoleon passed nearly two days at Erfurt, during which the reorganization of his troops advanced rapidly, as the magazines and stores of the place were sufficient to recruit them in every department. Their reassembled force amounted to about eighty thousand men. This, together with the troops left to their fate in the garrison towns in Germany, was all that remained of two hundred and eighty thousand, with which Napoleon had begun the campaign. The garrisons amounted to about eighty thousand, so that the loss of the French rose to one hundred and twenty thousand men. These garrisons, so imprudently left behind, were of course abandoned to their fate, or to the discretion of the enemy; Napoleon consoling himself with the boast, « that, if they could form a junction in the valley of the Elbe, eighty thousand Frenchmen might break through all obstacles.» Instructions were sent to the various commanders, to evacuate the places they held, and form such a junction; but it is believed that none of them reached the generals to whom they were addressed.

It is probable that, but for the relief afforded by this halt, and the protection of the citadel and defences of Erfurt, Napoleon, in his retreat from Leipsic, must have lost all that remained to him of an army. He had received news, however, of a character to preclude his longer

stay in this place of refuge. The Bavarian army, so lately his allies, with a strong auxiliary force of Austrians, amounting in all to fifty thousand, under Wrede, were hurrying from the banks of the Inn, and had reached Wurtzburg on the Maine, with the purpose of throwing themselves in hostile fashion between the army of Napoleon and the frontier of France. In addition to this unpleasing intelligence, he learned that the Austrians and Prussians were pressing forward, as far as Weimar and Laugensalza, so that he was once more in danger of being completely surrounded. Urged by these circumstances, Napoleon left Erfurt on the 25th of October, amid weather as tempestuous as his fortunes.

An unfortunate determination of the allied councils directed Marshal Blucher to move in pursuit of Napoleon by Giessen and Wetzlar, and commanded him to leave the direct road to the banks of the Rhine, by Fulda and Gelnhaussen, open for the march of an Austrian column, expected to advance from Schmalkald. The most active and energetic of the pursuers was thus turned aside from Napoleon's direct path of retreat, and the Austrians, to whom it was yielded, did not come up in time to overtake the retreating enemy. The French were still followed, however, by the arrival of Cossacks under their adventurous leaders, Platoff, Czernicheff, Orloff-Dennizoff, and Ko-

waiski, who continued their harassing and destructive operations on their flanks and their rear.

In the mean while General Wrede, notwithstanding the inferiority of his forces to those of Buonaparte, persevered in his purpose of barring the return of Napoleon into France, and took up a position at Hanau for that purpose, where he was joined by the chiefs of the Cossacks already mentioned, who had pushed on before the advance of the French army, in hopes that they might afford Wrede their assistance. If Blucher and his troops had been now in the rear of Napoleon, his hour had in all probability arrived. But Wrede's force, of whom he had been unable to bring up above 45,000 men, was inferior to the attempt, almost always a dangerous one, of intercepting the retreat of a bold and desperate enemy upon the only road which can lead him to safety. It was upon a point, also, where the Bavarians had no particular advantage of position, which might have presented natural obstacles to the progress of the enemy.

Upon the 30th, the Bavarians had occupied the large wood of Lamboi, and were disposed in line on the right bank of a small river called the Kintzig, near a village named Neuhoff, where there is a bridge. The French threw a body of light troops into the wood, which was disputed from tree to tree, the close fire

of the sharp-shooters on both sides resembling that of a general *chasse*, such as is practised on the Continent. The combat was sustained for several hours without decided success, until Buonaparte commanded an attack in force on the left of the Bavarians. Two battalions of the Guards, under General Curial, were sent into the wood to support the French tirailleurs; and the Bavarians, at the sight of their grenadier-caps, imagined themselves attacked by the whole of that celebrated body, and gave way. A successful charge of cavalry was at the same time made on Wrede's left, which made it necessary for him to retreat behind the Kintzig. The Austro-Bavarian army continued to hold Hanau; but as the main road to Frankfort does not lead directly through that town, but passes on the south side of it, the desired line of retreat was left open to Napoleon, whose business it was to push forward to the Rhine, and avoid farther combat. But the rear-guard of the French army, consisting of 18,000 men, under command of Mortier, was still at Gelnhaussen; and Marmont was left with three corps of infantry to secure their retreat, while Buonaparte, with the advance, pushed on to Williamstadt, and from thence to Hockstadt, in the direction of Frankfort.

On the morning of the 31st, Marmont made a double attack upon the town of Hanau, and the position of Wrede. Of the first, he pos-

sessed himself by a bombardment. The other attack took place near the bridge of Neuhoff. The Bavarians had at first the advantage, and pushed a body of 1000 or 1200 men across the Kintzig; but the instant attack and destruction of these by the bayonet impressed their general with greater caution. Wrede himself was at this moment dangerously wounded, and the Prince of OEttingen, his son-in-law, killed on the spot. General Fresnel, who succeeded Wrede in the command, acted with more reserve. He drew off from the combat; and the French, more intent on prosecuting their march to the Rhine than on improving their advantages over the Bavarians, followed the Emperor's line of retreat in the direction of Frankfort.

An instance of rustic loyalty and sagacity was displayed during the action, by a German miller, which may serve to vary the recurring detail of military movements. This man, observing the fate of the battle, and seeing a body of Bavarian infantry hard pressed by a large force of French cavalry, had the presence of mind to admit the water into his mill stream when the Bavarians had passed its channel, and thus suddenly interposed an obstacle between them and the pursuers, which enabled the infantry to halt and resume their ranks. The sagacious peasant was rewarded with a pension by the King of Bavaria.

The loss of the French in this sharp action was supposed to reach to about 6000 men; that of the Austro-Bavarians exceeded 10,000. Escaped from this additional danger, Napoleon arrived at Frankfort upon the 30th October, and left, upon the 1st November, a town which was soon destined to receive other guests. On the next day he arrived at Mayence (Mentz), which he left upon the 7th November, and arriving on the 9th at Paris, concluded his second unsuccessful campaign.

The Emperor had speedy information that the temper of the public was by no means tranquil. The victory of Hanau, though followed by no other effect than that of getting clear of the enemy, who had presumed to check the retreat of the Emperor, alone shed a lustre on the arms of Napoleon, which they greatly needed, for his late successive misfortunes had awakened both critics and murmurers. The rupture of the armistice seemed to be the date of his declension, as indeed the junction of the Austrians enabled the allies to bear him down by resistless numbers. Nine battles had been fought since that period, including the action at Culm, which, in its results, is well entitled to the name. Of these, Buonaparte only gained two—those of Dresden and Hanau; that at Wachau was indecisive; while at Gross-Beeren, at Jauer on the Katzbach, at Culm, at Dennewitz, at Mœckern, and at Leipsic, the

allies obtained decisive and important victories.

The French had been still more unfortunate in the number of bloody skirmishes which were fought almost everywhere through the scene of war. They were outnumbered in cavalry, and especially in light cavalry; they were out-numbered, too, in light corps of infantry and sharp-shooters; for the Germans, who had entered into the war with general enthusiasm, furnished numerous reinforcements of this description to the regular armies of the allies. These disasters, however they might be glossed over, had not escaped the notice of the French; nor was it the sight of a few banners, and a column of 4000 Bavarian prisoners, ostentatiously paraded, that prevented their asking, what was become of upwards of 200,000 soldiers—what charm had dissolved the Confederation of the Rhine—and why they heard rumours of Russians, Austrians, Prussians, Germans, on the east, and of English, Spanish, and Portuguese on the south, approaching the inviolable frontiers of the Great Nation? During the bright sunshine of prosperity, a nation may be too much dazzled with victory; but the gloomy horizon, obscured by adversity, shows objects in their real colours.

The fate of the garrisons in Germany, which Buonaparte had so imprudently omitted to evacuate, was not such as to cure this inci-

pient disaffection. The Emperor had never another opportunity, during this war, to collect the veteran troops thus unhappily left behind, under his banner, though often missing them at his greatest need. The dates of their respective surrender, referring to a set of detached facts, which have no influence upon the general current of history, may be as well succinctly recited in this place.

St-Cyr at Dresden, finding himself completely abandoned to his own slender resources, made on the 11th of November a capitulation to evacuate the place, with his garrison of 35,000 men (of whom very many were however invalids), who were to have a safe conduct to France, under engagement not to serve against the allies for six months. Schwartzenberg refused to ratifiy the capitulation, as being much too favourable to the besieged. He offered St-Cyr, who had already left Dresden, to replace him there in the same condition of defence which he enjoyed when the agreement was entered into. This was contrary to the rules of war; for how was it possible for the French commandant to be in the same situation as before the capitulation, when the enemy had become completely acquainted with his means of defence, and resources? But the French general conceived it more expedient to submit, with his army, to become prisoners

of war, reserving his right to complain of breach of capitulation.

Stettin surrendered on the 21st of November, after an eight months' blockade. Eight thousand French remained prisoners of war. Here the Prussians regained no less than three hundred and fifty pieces of artillery.

On the 29th of November, the important city of Dantzic surrendered, after trenches had been open before it for forty days. As in the case of Dresden, the sovereigns refused to ratify the stipulation, which provided for the return of the garrison to France, but made the commandant, Rapp, the same proposal which had been offered to the Mareschal St-Cyr; which Rapp in like manner declined. About nine thousand French were therefore sent prisoners into Russia. But the Bavarians, Westphalians, and Poles, belonging to the garrison, were permitted to return to their homes. Many of them took service with the allies. The detention of this garrison must also be recorded against the allies as a breach of faith, which the temptation of diminishing the enemy's forces cannot justify.

After the battle of Leipsic, Tauentzein had been detached to blockade Wittenberg, and besiege Torgau. The latter place was yielded on the 26th December, with a garrison of ten thousand wretches, amongst whom a pestilen-

tial fever was raging. Zamosç, in the Duchy of Warsaw, capitulated on the 22d, and Modlin on the 25th of December.

At the conclusion of the year 1813, only the following places, situated in the rear of the allies, remained in the hands of the French; —Hamburgh, Magdeburg, Wittenberg, Custrin, Glogau, with the citadels of Erfurt and of Wurtzburg, the French having in the last two instances evacuated the towns.

Two circumstances are remarkable concerning the capture of the surrendered fortresses. The first is the dismal state of the garrisons. The men, who had survived the Russian campaign, and who had been distributed into these cities and fortresses by Murat, were almost all, from the hardships they had endured, and perhaps from their being too suddenly accommodated with more genial food, subject to diseases which speedily became infectious, and spread from the military to the inhabitants. When the severities of a blockade were added to this general tendency to illness, the deaths became numerous, and the case of the survivors made them envious of those who died. So virulent was the contagion at Torgau, that the Prussians, to whom the place was rendered on the 26th December, did not venture to take possession of it till a fortnight afterwards, when the ravage of the pestilence began to decline. Thus widely extended, and thus

late prolonged, were the fatal effects of the Russian expedition.

The other point worth notice is, that the surrender of each fortress rendered disposable a blockading army of the allies, proportioned to the strength of the garrisons, which ought, according to the rules of war, to be at least two to one.[1] Thus, while thousands after thousands of the French were marched to distant prisons in Austria and Russia, an addition was regularly made to the armies of the allies, equal at least to double the number of those that were withdrawn from the French army.

While these successes were in the act of being obtained in their rear, the allied sovereigns of Russia and Prussia advanced upon the Rhine, the left bank of which was almost entirely liberated from the enemy. It is a river upon which all the Germans look with a national pride, that sometimes takes almost the appearance of filial devotion. When the advanced guard of the army of the allies first came in sight of its broad majesty of flood, they hailed the Father River with such reiterated shouts, that those who were behind stood to their arms and pressed forward, supposing that an action was about to take place. The

[1] Three to one, according to the general rule of war, is the proportion of a blockading army to the garrison which it masks. But where there is little apprehension of relief or of strong sorties, the number may be much reduced.

proud and exulting feeling of recovered independence was not confined to those brave men who had achieved the liberation of their country, but extended everywhere, and animated the whole mass of the population of Germany.

The retreat of the French armies, or their relics, across the land which they had so long over-run, and where they had levelled and confounded all national distinctions, might be compared to the abatement of the great deluge, when land-marks, which had been long hid from the eye, began to be once more visible and distinguished. The reconstruction of the ancient sovereignties was the instant occupation of the allies.

From the very field of battle at Leipsic, the Electoral Prince of Hesse departed to assume, amid the acclamations of the inhabitants, the sovereignty of the territories of his fathers. The allies, on 2d November, took possession of Hanover and its dependencies in name of the King of England. The gallant Duke of Brunswick, whose courage, as well as his ardent animosity against Buonaparte, we have already had occasion to commemorate, returned at the same time into the possession of his hereditary estates; and the ephemeral kingdom of Westphalia, the appanage of Jérôme Buonaparte, composed out of the spoils of these

principalities, vanished into air, like the palace of Aladdin in the Arabian tale.

Those members of the Confederacy of the Rhine, who had hitherto been contented to hold their crowns and coronets, under the condition of being liege vassals to Buonaparte, and who were as much tired of his constant exactions as ever a drudging fiend was of the authority of a necromancer, lost no time in renouncing his sway, after his talisman was broken. Bavaria and Wirtemberg had early joined the alliance,—the latter power the more willingly, that the Crown Prince had, even during Napoleon's supremacy, refused to acknowledge his sway. The lesser princes, therefore, had no alternative but to declare, as fast as they could, their adherence to the same cause. Their ministers thronged to the head-quarters of the allied sovereigns, where they were admitted to peace and fraternity on the same general terms; namely, that each state should contribute, within a certain period, a year's income of their territories, with a contingent of soldiers double in numbers to that formerly exacted by Buonaparte, for maintaining the good cause of the alliance. They consented willingly; for though the demand might be heavy in the mean time, yet, with the downfall of the French Emperor, there was room to hope for that lasting peace which all men now

believed to be inconsistent with a continuance of his power.

Waiting until their reinforcements should come from the interior of Germany, and until the subordinate princes should bring forward their respective contingents of troops, and desirous also to give Napoleon another opportunity of treating, the allied sovereigns halted on the banks of the Rhine, and cantoned their army along the banks of that river. This afforded a space to discover, whether the lofty mind of Napoleon could be yet induced to bend to such a peace as might consist with the material change in the circumstances of Europe, effected in the two last campaigns. Such a pacification was particularly the object of Austria; and the greater hope was entertained of its being practicable, that the same train of misfortunes which had driven Napoleon beyond the Rhine, had darkened his political horizon in other quarters.

Italy, so long the scene of his triumphs, was now undergoing the same fate as his other conquests, and rapidly melting away from his grasp. At the beginning of the campaign, the Viceroy Eugène, with about forty-five thousand men, had defended the north of Italy, with great skill and valour, against the Austrian general, Hiller, who confronted him with superior forces. The frontiers of Illyria were the chief scene of their military operations.

The French maintained themselves there until the defection of the Bavarians opened the passes of the Tyrol to the Austrian army, after which, Eugène was obliged to retire behind the Adige. The warlike Croatians, declaring in favour of their ancient sovereigns of Austria, mutinied, and rose in arms on several points. The important seaport of Trieste was taken by the Austrians on the 21st of October. General Nugent had entered the mouth of the Po with an English squadron, with a force sufficient to occupy Ferrara and Ravenna, and organize a general insurrection against the French. It was known also, that Murat, who had begun to fear lest he should be involved in the approaching fall of Napoleon, and who remembered with more feeling the affronts which Napoleon had put upon him from time to time, than the greatness to which he had been elevated by him, was treating with the allies, and endeavouring to make a peace which should secure his own authority under their sanction. Thus, there was no point of view in which Italy could be regarded as a source of assistance to Buonaparte; on the contrary, that fair country, the subject of his pride and his favour, was in the greatest danger of being totally lost to him.

The Spanish Peninsula afforded a still more alarming prospect. The battle of Vittoria had entirely destroyed the usurped authority of

Joseph Buonaparte, and Napoleon himself had become desirous to see the war ended, at the price of totally ceding the kingdom on which he had seized so injustifiably, and which he had, in his fatal obstinacy, continued to grasp, like a furious madman holding a hot iron until it has scorched him to the bone.

After that decisive battle, there was no obstacle in front to prevent the Duke of Wellington from entering France, but he chose first to reduce the strong frontier fortresses of Saint Sebastian and Pampeluna. The first capitulated finally on the 9th September; and notwithstanding the skill and bravery of Soult, which were exerted to the uttermost, he could not relieve Pampeluna. The English army, at least its left wing, passed the Bidassoa upon the 7th October, and Pampeluna surrendered on the 31st of the same month. Thus was the most persevering and the most hated of Buonaparte's enemies placed in arms upon the French soil, under the command of a general who had been so uniformly successful, that he seemed to move hand in hand with victory. It was but a slender consolation, in this state of matters, that Suchet, the Duke of Albufera, still maintained himself in Catalonia, his head-quarters being at Barcelona. In fact it would have been of infinitely more importance to Buonaparte, had the mareschal and those troops, who had not yet been discouraged by

defeat, been on the north side of the Pyrenees, and ready to co-operate in defence of the frontiers of France.

To parry this pressing danger, Napoleon had recourse to a plan, which, had it been practised the year before, might have placed the affairs of Spain on a very different footing. He resolved, as we have hinted, to desist from the vain undertaking, which had cost himself so much blood and treasure; to undo his own favourite work; to resign the claims of his brother to the crown of Spain; and, by restoring the legitimate sovereign to the throne, endeavour to form such an alliance with him as might take Spain out of the list of his enemies, and perhaps add her to that of his friends. Had he had recourse to this expedient in the previous year, Ferdinand's appearance in Spain might have had a very important effect in embroiling the councils of the Cortes. It is well known that the unfortunate distinctions of Royalists and Liberalists, were already broken out among the Spaniards, and, from the colours in which his present Majesty of Spain has since shown himself, there is great room to doubt whether he had either temper, wisdom, or virtue sufficient to act as a mediator betwixt the two classes of his subjects, of which both were inclined to carry their opposite opinions into extremes. It is more than probable that a civil war might even then have taken place,

between the King, desirous of regaining the plenitude of authority conferred on him by the ancient constitution, and the Cortes, anxious to maintain the liberties which they had recently recovered, and carried, by their new constitution, to the extent of republican license. If such a war had arisen, King Ferdinand would probably have fallen into the snare prepared for him by Buonaparte, and called in his late jailer, in the capacity of his ally, against the Cortes, and perhaps also against the English, who, though not approving of the theoretical extravagances of the system of government, which had divided the patriots into two civil factions, must, nevertheless, have considered that assembly as the representatives of the Spanish people, and the allies with whom the British had formed their league. Talleyrand is said to have recommended the liberation of Ferdinand at a much earlier period. He called the measure an olla podrida for Spain.

But Napoleon's present concession came too late, and was too evidently wrung from him by the most pressing necessity, to permit Ferdinand, however desirous of his liberty, to accept of it on the terms offered. The reader may, indeed, be curious to know in what language Napoleon could address the prince whose person he had seized, and imprisoned like a kidnapper, and on whose throne he had

so long and so pertinaciously endeavoured to support a usurper. Perhaps, when writing the following letter, Buonaparte was himself sensible that his conduct admitted of no glossing over; he, therefore, came to the point, it will be observed, at once, trusting probably that the hope of being restored to his liberty and kingdom would be so agreeable in itself, that the captive monarch would not be disposed strictly to criticise the circumstances which had occasioned so pleasing an offer, or the expressions in which it was conveyed.

« My Cousin —The state of my empire and of my political situation lead me to put a final adjustment to the affairs of Spain. The English are exciting anarchy and jacobinism; they endeavour to overthrow the crown and the nobility, in order to establish a republic. I cannot, without being deeply affected, think on the destruction of a nation which interests me, both by its neighbourhood, and its common interest concerning maritime commerce. I wish to re-establish the relations of friendship and good neighbourhood, which have so long been established betwixt France and Spain. You will therefore listen to what the Comte de la Forest will propose in my name,» etc.

Considering the terms of this letter, and contrasting them with the manner in which the friendly relations alluded to had been

broken off, and that in which the interest taken by Napoleon in the kingdom of Spain had been displayed, the hypocritical professions of the writer were too obviously dictated by necessity, to impose upon the meanest understanding. The answer of Ferdinand was not without dignity. He declined to treat without having an opportunity of consulting with the Regency of Spain, and required permission to hear a deputation of his subjects, who might at once inform him of the actual state of affairs in Spain, and point out a remedy for the evils under which the kingdom suffered.

« If,» said the prince, in his reply to Napoleon's proposal, « this liberty is not permitted to me, I prefer remaining at Valençey, where I have now lived four years and a half, and where I am willing to die, if such is God's pleasure.» Finding the prince firm upon this score, Napoleon, to whom his freedom might be possibly some advantage, and when his captivity could no longer in any shape benefit him, consented that Ferdinand should be liberated, upon a treaty being drawn up between the Duke of San Carlos, as the representative of Ferdinand, and the Comte de la Forest, as plenipotentiary of Napoleon; but which treaty should not be ratified until it had been approved of by the Regency. The heads were briefly these:—1, Napoleon recognized Ferdinand as the King of Spain and the Indies. 2,

Ferdinand undertook that the English should evacuate Spain, and particularly Minorca and Ceuta. 3, The two governments became engaged to each other, to place their relations on the footing prescribed by the treaty of Dunkirk, and which had been maintained until 1772. Lastly, the new king engaged to pay a suitable revenue to his father, and a jointure to his mother, in case of her survivance; and provision was made for re-establishing the commercial relations betwixt France and Spain.

In this treaty of Valençey, subscribed the 11th of December, 1813, the desire of Buonaparte to embroil Spain with her ally, Great Britain, is visible not only in the second article, but in the third. For as Napoleon always contended that his opposition to the rights exercised on the sea by the English had been grounded on the treaty of Utrecht, his reference to that treaty upon the present occasion shows that he had not yet lost sight of his Continental System.

The Regency of Spain, when the treaty of Valençey was laid before them, refused to ratify it, both in virtue of a decree of the Cortes, which, as early as January, 1811, declared that there should be neither truce nor negotiation with France, until the king should enjoy his entire liberty, and on account of their treaty with England, in which Spain engaged to contract no peace without England's concurrence.

Thus obliged to renounce the hopes of fettering Spain, as a nation, with any conditions, Buonaparte at length released Ferdinand from his confinement, and permitted him to return to his kingdom, upon his personal subscription of the treaty, trusting that, in the political alterations which his arrival might occasion in Spain, something might turn up to serve his own views, which could never be advanced by Ferdinand's continuing in confinement. Nothing of the kind, however, took place, nor is it needful either to detain the reader farther with the Spanish affairs, or again to revert to them. Ferdinand is said, by the French, to have received Napoleon's proposals with much satisfaction, and to have written a letter of thanks to the Emperor for his freedom, obtained after nearly six years' most causeless imprisonment. If so, the circumstance must be received as evidence of Ferdinand's singularly grateful disposition, of which we believe there are few other examples to be quoted. The liberated monarch returned to his territories, at the conclusion of all this negotiation, in the end of March, 1814. The event is here anticipated, that there may be no occasion to return to it.

Another state-prisoner of importance was liberated about the same time. Nearly at the commencement of the year 1814, proposals had been transmitted, by the agency of Cardinal Maury and the Bishops of Evreux and Plaisance, to Pius VII., still detained at Fon-

tainebleau. His liberation was tendered to him, and, on condition of his ceding a part of the territories of the church, he was to be restored to the remainder.

« The dominions of Saint Peter are not my property, » answered the pontiff; « they belong to the church, and I cannot consent to their cession. »

« To prove the Emperor's good intentions, » said the Bishop of Plaisance, « I have orders to announce your Holiness's return to Rome. »

« It must then be with all my cardinals, » said Pius VII.

« Under the present circumstances that is impossible. »

« Well, then, a carriage to transport me is all I desire—I wish to be at Rome, to acquit myself of my duties as Head of the Church. »

An escort, termed a guard of honour, attended him, commanded by a colonel, who treated his Holiness with much respect, but seemed disposed to suffer no one to speak with him in private. Pius VII. convoked, however, the cardinals who were at Fontainebleau, to the number of seventeen, and took an affecting farewell. As the Pope was about to depart, he commanded them to wear no decoration received from the French government; to accept no pension of their bestowing; and to assist at no festival to which they might be invited. On the 24th of January, Pius left Fon-

tainebleau, and returned by slow journeys to Savona, where he remained from the 19th of February to the 19th of March. He reached Fiorenzuola on the 23d, where his French escort was relieved by an Austrian detachment, by whom the pontiff was received with all the usual honours; and he arrived at Rome on the 18th of May, amid the acclamations of thousands, who thronged to receive his benediction.

With such results terminated an act of despotic authority, one of the most impolitic, as well as unpopular, practised by Buonaparte during his reign. He himself was so much ashamed of it, as to disown his having given any orders for the captivity of the Pontiff, though it was continued under his authority for five years and upwards. It was remarkable, that when the Pope was taken from Rome as a prisoner, Murat was in possession of his dominions, as the connexion and ally of Buonaparte; and now his Holiness found the same Murat and his army at Rome, and received from his hands, in the opposite character of ally of the Emperor of Austria, the re-delivery of the patrimony of Saint Peter's in its full integrity.

Thus was restored to its ancient allegiance that celebrated city, which had for a time borne the title of SECOND in the French dominions. The revolution in Holland came also

to augment the embarrassments of Napoleon, and dislocate what remained of the immense additions which he had attempted to unite with his empire. That country had been first impoverished by the total destruction of its commerce, under pretence of enforcing the Continental System. It was from his inability to succeed in his attempt to avert this pest from the peaceful and industrious Dutchmen, that Louis Buonaparte had relinquished in disgust a sceptre, the authority of which was not permitted to protect the people over whom it was swayed.

The distress which followed, upon the introduction of these unnatural restrictions into a country, the existence of which depended on the freedom of its commerce, was almost incredible. At Amsterdam, the population was reduced from 220,000 to 109,000 souls. In the Hague, Delft, and elsewhere, many houses were pulled down, or suffered to fall to ruin by the proprietors, from inability to pay the taxes. At Haarlem, whole streets were in desolation, and about five hundred houses were entirely dismantled. The preservation of the dikes was greatly neglected for want of funds, and the sea, breaking in at the Polders and elsewhere, threatened to resume what human industry had withdrawn from her reign.

The discontent of the people arose to the highest pitch, and their thoughts naturally

reverted to the paternal government of the house of Orange, and the blessings which they had enjoyed under it. But with the prudence, which is the distinguishing mark of the national character, the Dutch knew, that until the power of France should be broken, any attempt at insurrection in Holland must be hopeless; they, therefore, contented themselves with forming secret confederations among the higher order of citizens in the principal towns, who made it their business to prevent all premature disturbances on the part of the lower classes, insinuating themselves, at the same time, so much into their favour, that they were sure of having them at their disposal, when a propitious moment for action should arise. Those intrusted with the secret of the intended insurrection acted with equal prudence and firmness; and the sagacious, temperate, and reasonable character of the nation was never seen to greater advantage than upon this occasion. The national guards were warmly disposed to act in the cause. The rumours of Buonaparte's retreat from Leipsic,

——— for such an host
Fled not in silence through the affrighted deep,

united to prepare the public mind for resistance to the foreign yoke; and the approach of General Bulow towards the banks of the

Yssel, became the signal for general insurrection.

On the 14th November, the Orange flag was hoisted at the Hague and at Amsterdam, amid the ancient acclamations of « Orange-boven » (Up with the Orange). At Rotterdam, a small party of the Dutch patriots, of the better class, waited on the prefect, Le Brun, Duke of Placentia, and, showing the orange cockade which they wore, addressed the French general in these words :—« You may guess from these colours the purpose which has brought us hither, and the events which are about to take place. You, who are now the weakest, know that we are the strongest—and we, the strongest, know that you are the weakest. You will act wisely to depart from this place in quiet; and the sooner you do so, you are the less likely to expose yourself to insult, and it may be to danger. »

A revolution of so important a nature had never certainly been announced to the sinking party, with so little tumult, or in such courteous terms. The reply of General Le Brun was that of a Frenchman, seldom willing to be outdone in politeness ;—« I have expected this summons for some time, and am very willing to accede to your proposal, and take my departure immediately. » He mounted into his carriage accordingly, and drove through

an immense multitude now assembled, without meeting any other insult than being required to join in the universal cry of Orange-boven.

The Dutch were altogether without arms when they took the daring resolution to reconstruct their ancient government, and were for some time in great danger. But they were secured by the advance of the Russians to their support, while forces from England were sent over, to the number of 6000 men, under General Graham, now Lord Lynedoch; so that the French troops, who had thrown themselves into two or three forts, were instantly blockaded, and prevented from disturbing the country by excursions.

No event during the war made a more general and deep impression on the mind of the British nation, than the liberation of Holland, which is well entitled by a recent author, « one of the most fortunate events which could at that moment have taken place. The rapidity with which the Dutch, from being obstacles to the invasion of France, became the instruments by which that undertaking was most facilitated, could only have been brought about through the detestable system of government which Buonaparte had pursued with them. »[1]

[1] *Operations of the Allied Armies in* 1813 *and* 1814, p. 40

Thus victory, having changed her course, like some powerful spring-tide, was now, in the end of the year 1813, receding at every point from the dominions which its strong and rapid onward course had so totally overwhelmed.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

REFLECTIONS ON THE CONDUCT OF NAPOLEON TOWARDS THE PRINCE ROYAL OF SWEDEN.

Page 98.

(*Translated from the original French.*)

It was Napoleon himself, who, by his insupportable pretensions, forced Sweden to take a part in opposition to him. From the period of the election of the Prince of Ponte Corvo, the only discussions the Prince had with the Emperor consisted in refusals, on the Prince's part, to enter into engagements hostile to the interests of the nation who had chosen him to be her ruler.

When the first overtures respecting his election in Sweden were made to him by a Swedish nobleman, and by General Count de Wrede, he went immediately to St Cloud, to inform the Emperor, who said to him :—

« I cannot be of any use to you—let things take their course, » etc.

The Prince went to Plombières. At his return, he paid his respects to the Emperor, who, addressing him in presence of a good many persons, asked if he had lately had any news from Sweden?

« Yes, Sire. »

« What do they say? » replied the Emperor.

« That your Majesty's *chargé-d'affaires* at Stockholm opposes my election, and says publicly, that your Majesty prefers the King of Denmark. »

The Emperor answered with surprise, « It is not possible; » and changed the subject.

It was, however, in consequence of secret instructions given to M. Désaguiers, that he had presented a note in favour of the King of Denmark; but Napoleon, in order not to commit himself in an affair of such delicacy, and in which a check would have been a proof of the decline of his political ascendancy, disavowed the conduct of M. Désaguiers.

When this agent was recalled a short time afterwards, the Duc de Cadore frankly confessed to M. de Lagerbjelke, the Swedish minister at Paris « *that they had sacrificed an innocent person.* »

The Emperor had expressed himself in the most friendly manner to King Charles XIII., as well as to the Prince of Ponte Corvo, consenting that the Prince should accept the succession to the throne of Sweden. The act of election had been published in the *Moniteur*, and ten days had elapsed without the Emperor's having said any thing about the Prince Royal's departure. Having finished the preparations for his journey, and seeing that the Emperor still remained silent on the subject, the Prince determined to apply to him for letters-patent, emancipating him (the Prince) from his allegiance.

To this formal application, the Emperor replied, that the expediting of these letters had been retarded only by the proposal made by a member of the privy-council, of a preliminary condition.—« What is it? » said the Prince. —« It is, that you are to come under an engagement never to bear arms against me. » The Prince Royal, greatly surprised, answered, that his election by the Diet of Sweden, and the consent to it already given by the Emperor, both to himself and to King Charles XIII., had already made him a Swedish subject; and that, in that quality, he could not subscribe this engagement.—¹ « Your Majesty tells me, » added he, « that this is the proposal of a member of the council. I am very sure it never could have come from yourself, Sire; it must have come from the Arch-

¹ Here the Emperor frowned, and appeared embarrassed.

Chancellor, or the Grand Judge, who were not aware to what a height this proposal would raise me.»—« What do you mean?»—« If you prevent me from accepting a crown, unless I come under an engagement never to fight against you, Sire,—is not this, in fact, placing me in your line as a General?»

The Emperor, after a moment's reflection, said to him, in a suppressed voice, and with a gesture which betrayed his agitation :—

« Well, go ;—our destinies are about to be accomplished.»

« I beg your pardon, Sire, I did not hear you rightly.»

« Go ;—our destinies are about to be accomplished,» repeated the Emperor, in a more distinct, but equally agitated voice.

When the report first became current that there was an intention in Sweden to elect the Prince of Ponte Corvo Prince Royal, Mareschal Davoust, thinking to please his master, said, in the Emperor's chamber :—« The Prince of Ponte Corvo suspects nothing.» This piece of irony made Napoleon smile. He answered in a low voice,—« He is not yet elected.»

The Prince, who till then had been very undecided, intimated, that if the King and the States of Sweden fixed their choice on him, he should accept.

During this interval, Napoleon, constantly wishing to prevent him from becoming heir to the throne of Sweden, said to him one day :—« You will probably be called to Sweden. I had formed the design of giving you Arragon and Catalonia; for Spain is too great a country for my brother's strength of capacity.»

The Prince made no reply. For a considerable time back, not wishing to be an object of inquietude to government, he had been considering what means he should use to gain Napoleon's confidence. The greatness of France, the victories gained by her armies, and the éclat which they reflected upon the commander, imposed on the Prince the duty of not endeavouring to emulate the power of the Emperor.

In his conversations with Napoleon, he endeavoured to

do away the impressions which the Emperor entertained against him. For this purpose he took general views, spoke of the interests of great states—of the fortunes of men who had astonished the world by their successes, of the difficulties and obstacles which these men had had to surmount; and finally, of the public tranquillity and happiness which had been the result of these circumstances, from the moment that secondary interests had been satisfied.

The Emperor listened attentively, and seemed almost always to applaud the principles of stability and preservation which the Prince enlarged upon. At times, when the latter reminded the Emperor of the immensity of the means of recompense which he had at his disposal, Napoleon, struck by what he said, held out his hand to him affectionately, when they separated, and seemed, by his manner, to say to him,—« Reckon always upon my friendship and support.»

The Prince used to return from these conversations, thinking himself no longer an object of suspicion to the Emperor. He expressed this belief to the members of Napoleon's family, in order that they, in their turn, might assure the Emperor, that as the Prince went entirely into his system, both from duty and from interest, any mistrust of him should be laid aside.

There were individuals of Napoleon's family, on those occasions, who smiled at the Prince's simplicity, and told him what the Emperor had said the evening before, immediately after the conversation the Prince and he had had together; and all that the Emperor said bore marks of the greatest insincerity, and of an ill-will constantly founded on his ideas of the extravagant ambition of the Prince. This ill-will seemed to be mitigated, when the time came for the Prince's departure for Sweden. One of his friends was in high favour with Napoleon. On the very day the Prince departed, Napoleon, seeing this friend come in, went up to him and said: —« Well! does not the Prince regret France? »—« Yes, undoubtedly. »—« And I, for my part, should have been very glad if he had not accepted the invitation; but there is no help for it—— »

And then, checking himself,—« Besides, he does not love me. »

On its being answered, that Napoleon was mistaken, and that the Prince had chosen his party, and had been frankly and cordially attached to him for a long time past, the Emperor replied,—

« We have not understood each other: now it is too late: he has his own interests, his own policy, and I have mine. »

Napoleon had acquiesced in the reasons given him by the Prince, for his refusal to engage not to take arms against him. He saw very well that he ought to have expected such a refusal, and that he ought not to have exposed himself to it. He had even endeavoured to efface any painful impression which his proposal had made on the Prince, by making him the most friendly promises of an indemnity of two millions for the cession of his principality of Ponte Corvo, and his possessions in Poland, and leaving him all the others in property.[1] He had, besides, permitted him to take with him all his aides-de-camp.

The Prince knew not what was at the bottom of the Emperor's thoughts, but when he left him he was full of confidence in him; and Napoleon had no just motive for imputing to him any designs hostile to his interest, and still less to the interest of France. This illusion, on the part of the Prince, was of short duration. The reception he met with in all the places he passed through, and particularly when he arrived in Sweden,—the speeches addressed to him, and the answers he made,—all contributed to displease the Emperor. It seemed to him as if the Prince attracted some share of that general attention which should have been fixed on him alone. The patriotic sentiments expressed by the speakers of the four orders were no more to his taste than those of the Prince in his answers. He and the Swedes were equally the objects of the Emperor's sarcasms, and even of his insults:

[1] The Prince never received more than one million of the two which had been promised him.

he treated them as Jacobins, as anarchists; and it was chiefly against the Prince that these attacks were levelled. To show the Prince his displeasure, he annulled all the promises he had made him; and took from him all the lands with which he had endowed him, and which he reunited to his own domains. He recalled all the Prince Royal's French aides-de-camp. It was in vain that the Prince, in his correspondence, tried to appease him, by writing, among others, the following letter:—

« At the moment when I was going to address my thanks to your Majesty, for your goodness in extending for a year the leave granted to the French officers who have accompanied me to Sweden, I am informed that your Majesty has retracted that favour. This unexpected disappointment, and, indeed, every thing that reaches me from Paris, makes me sensible that your Majesty is not well disposed towards me. What have I done, Sire, to deserve this treatment? I suppose that calumny alone has been the cause of it. In the new situation in which Fortune has placed me, I should doubtless be more exposed to it than ever, were I not fortunate enough to find a defender in your Majesty's own heart. Whatever may be said to you, Sire, I beseech you to believe that I have nothing to reproach myself with, and that I am entirely devoted to your person, not merely through the strength of my old associations, but from a sentiment that is unalterable. If things are not conducted in Sweden entirely according to your Majesty's wish, this is solely owing to the Constitution. To infringe this Constitution is not in the power of the King, and still less in mine. There are still here many particular interests to be melted down in the great national crucible,—four orders of the state to be tied up in one bundle,—and it is only by means of very prudent and measured conduct, that I can hope to sit one day on the throne of Sweden. As M. Gentil de St Alphonse, my aide-de-camp, returns to France in conformity to your Majesty's orders, I make him the bearer of this letter. Your Majesty may question him; he has seen every thing; let him tell your Majesty the truth. You

will see in what a situation I am placed, and how many measures I have to keep. He will tell your Majesty whether or not I am anxious to please you, and if I am not here in a state of continual torment between the pain of displeasing you and my new duties.

Sire, your Majesty has grieved me by withdrawing from me the officers whom you had granted me for a year. Since you command it, I send them back to France. Perhaps your Majesty will be inclined to alter your decision; in which case, I beg that you yourself will fix the number that you may think proper to send me. I shall receive them from you with gratitude. If, on the contrary, your Majesty retains them in France, I recommend them to your goodness. They have always served with distinction, and have had no share in the rewards which were distributed after the last campaign.»

Napoleon's ill humour against the Prince changed to positive resentment. He repented that he had agreed to his going, and he made no secret of it; for he went the length of saying, before his courtiers,—« That he had a mind to make him finish his course of the Swedish language at Vincennes.»

While the Prince refused to believe the information, which he had received from the Tuileries, of such a threat as this, Napoleon was actually thinking of putting it in execution, and of repeating, upon him, the capture of the Duke d'Enghien. The Prince at last was convinced of the truth of what he had heard, by the discovery of a plot formed by Napoleon's agents, for seizing him in the neighbourhood of *Haga*, and carrying him on board a vessel which they had in readiness. The attempt failed through a mere accident. The conspirators, all foreigners but one, thought themselves discovered: they instantly embarked, and sailed in the night. [1]

[1] M. de Salazar, formerly aide-de-camp to the Duke of Ragusa, who had quitted the service, and retired into England, was one of those who gave information respecting a plan formed in France to carry off the Prince Royal. He made a full communication on this subject to an illustrious personage in England, and to Baron de Rehausen, the Swed-

This conduct, odious as it was, made no change in the disposition of the Prince towards Napoleon. He looked upon it as the effect of intrigues formed by the personal enemies of both, and by enemies of France. He saw nothing in it, besides, but a degree of personal animosity which might pass away, and which ought to have no influence on the political determinations of Sweden. But Napoleon, listening to nothing but his hatred, knowing that the Prince, being aware of his designs, would now be on his guard, and having no longer any hope of surprising him, desired to place the Prince in open hostility to him. He took the surest method to accomplish this object by seizing Pomerania, because he thought that this insulting violation of public faith would force the Prince Royal to revenge the affront put upon Sweden, but at bottom directed against the Prince personally. In order to leave no room for doubt on this subject, the Emperor had given orders that the invasion should take place on the 26th of January, the Prince Royal's birth-day; but this refinement, so much in character, was thrown away; for the invasion could not be carried into effect till the morning of the 27th.[1]

The news of this invasion did not reach Stockholm till the 11th of February. The Prince immediately wrote the Emperor the following letter:—

"The accounts, which have just arrived, inform me that a division of the army under the orders of the Prince

ish Minister at London, who immediatly informed Count d'Engestrom of what had been revealed by M. de Salazar, as to the plots which Napoleon was laying against the personal safety of the Prince. In order to facilitate these communications, Baron de Rehausen was instructed to furnish M. de Salazar with money to enable him to go to Sweden. He arrived at Orebro during the Diet of 1812, and was admitted to some private audiences, in which he repeated to the Prince the declarations which he had previously made to Baron de Rehausen and Count d'Engestrom.

[1] It was from a similar motive that the Prince Royal opened the ports of Sweden to all nations on the 15th August, 1812, Napoleon's birth-day, and that the peace with England was signed at the same time.

of Eckmuhl, has invaded the territory of Swedish Pomerania, in the night between the 26th and 27th of January; that this division has continued its march, entered the capital of the duchy, and taken possession of the island of Rugen. The King expects that your Majesty will explain the reasons which have led you to act in a manner so diametrically opposite to the faith of existing treaties. My former connexion with your Majesty authorizes me to beseech you to explain your motives without delay, in order that I may be enabled to give the King my opinion as to the future policy which ought to be adopted by Sweden. This gratuitous outrage committed against Sweden is deeply felt by the people, and doubly so, Sire, by me, who am intrusted with the honour of defending them. If I have contributed to the triumphs of France; if I have uniformly wished to see her respected and happy, it never could enter into my thoughts to sacrifice the interests, the honour, and the national independence of the country which has adopted me. Your Majesty, so good a judge of what is right in the case which has happened, has already penetrated my resolution. Though not jealous of the glory and power by which you are surrounded, Sire, I am extremely sensible to the disgrace of being looked upon as a vassal. Your Majesty rules the greater part of Europe; but your dominion does not extend to the country to whose government I have been called. My ambition is limited to her defence; which I look upon as the lot assigned me by Providence. The effect produced on the people by the invasion which I now complain of, may have incalculable consequences; and though I am not a Coriolanus, nor command Volscians, I have a good enough opinion of the Swedes to assure you, Sire, that they are capable of daring and undertaking every thing, to revenge affronts which they have not provoked, and to preserve rights to which they are probably as much attached as to their existence.»

When the Emperor received this letter, it was observed that he foamed with rage, and cried, «Submit to your degradation, or die with arms in your hands!»

This, indeed, was the only alternative which he wished to leave the Prince; knowing very well what part would be taken by a man whom he himself had called, « A French head, with the heart of a Roman.»

There was no receding. The Prince declared to the King of England and the Emperor of Russia, that he was at war with Napoleon; and wrote the Emperor Alexander the following letter, dated from Stockholm, the 7th of March, 1812:

« The occupation of Swedish Pomerania by the French troops, induces the King to dispatch Count de Lowenhjelm, his aide-de-camp, to your Imperial Majesty. This officer, who enjoys the entire confidence of his sovereign, has it in charge to acquaint your Majesty with the motives which have served as a pretext for an invasion so diametrically in opposition to the subsisting treaties.

« The successive annexation of the coasts of the Mediterranean, of Holland, and of the Baltic, and the subjugation of the interior of Germany, must have pointed out, even to the least clear-sighted princes, that the laws of nations being thrown aside, were giving way to a system, which, destroying every kind of equilibrium, would unite a number of nations under the government of a single chief;—the tributary monarchs, terrified at this constantly increasing dominion, are waiting in consternation for the development of this vast plan.

« In the midst of this universal depression, men's eyes are turned towards your Majesty; they are already raised to you, sire, with confidence and hope; but suffer me to observe to your Majesty, that, in all the successes of life, there is nothing like the magical effect of the first instant;—so long as its influence lasts, every thing depends on him who chuses to act. Minds struck with astonishment are incapable of reflection; and every thing yields to the impulse of the charm which they fear, or by which they are attracted.

Be pleased, Sire, to receive with favour the expression of my gratitude for the sentiments which your Majesty has testified towards me. If I have still any wish to form, it is

for the continuation of a happiness, of which I shall always be worthy, in consequence of the value which I attach to it. »

It was not, then, the Emperor of Russia who prevailed upon Sweden to take up arms against Napoleon.—It was himself—himself alone,—who irresistibly compelled the Prince to throw himself among his enemies. In doing so, the Prince merely did what Napoleon desired; and the latter wished it, because, Sweden having given him no motive for directly attacking her, he saw no other way of regaining the mastery of the Prince's fortunes, but by placing him among the number of his enemies, whom he looked upon as already conquered, without suspecting that he was going to force them at last to conquer himself.

Meanwhile, still wishing to deceive the Prince, he made proposals to him. The Prince answered them by the following letter, the bearer of which was M. Signeul :

« Notes have just reached me; and I cannot refrain from expressing myself on the subject of them to your Imperial Majesty, with all the frankness which belongs to my character.

« When the wishes of the Swedish people called me to succeed to the throne, I hoped, in leaving France, that I should always be able to reconcile my personal affections with the interests of my new country. My heart cherished the hope that it might identify itself with the sentiments of this people, at the same time preserving the remembrance of its first attachments, and never losing sight of the glory of France, nor its sincere attachment to your Majesty—an attachment founded on a brotherhood in arms, which had been distinguished by so many great actions.

« It was with this hope that I arrived in Sweden.—I found a nation generally attached to France; but still more to its own liberty and laws :—jealous of your friendship, Sire, but not desirous of ever obtaining it at the expense of its honour and its independence—Your Majesty's minister chose to disregard this national feeling, and ruined every thing by his arrogance :—his communica-

tions bore no marks of that respect which crowned heads owe each other.—While fulfilling, according to the dictates of his own passions, the intentions of your Majesty, Baron Agguier spoke like a Roman proconsul, without recollecting that he was not addressing himself to slaves.

« This minister, then, was the first cause of the distrust which Sweden began to show as to your Majesty's intentions with regard to her; subsequent events were calculated to give it new weight.[1]

« I had already had the honour, Sire, by my letters of the 19th November and 8th December, 1810, to make your Majesty acquainted with the situation of Sweden, and the desire which she felt, to find in your Majesty a protector. She could attribute your Majesty's silence to nothing but unmerited indifference; and it became incumbent on her to take precautions against the storm that was ready to burst on the Continent.

« Sire, mankind has already suffered but too much. For twenty years the earth has been deluged with human blood; and to put a period to these sufferings is the only thing wanting to complete your Majesty's glory.

« If your Majesty desires that the King should intimate to his Majesty the Emperor Alexander the possibility of an accommodation, I augur enough, from the magnanimity of that monarch, to venture to assure you, that he will give a willing ear to overtures equitable at the same time for your empire and for the North. If an event, so unexpected, and so universally wished for, could take place, with what blessings would the nations of the Continent hail your Majesty! Then gratitude would be increased in proportion to the terror they now feel for the return of a scourge which has already been so heavy upon them, and the ravages of which have left such cruel marks.

« Sire, one of the happiest moments which I have experienced since leaving France was that in which I became assured that your Majesty had not altogether forgotten me. You have judged rightly as to my feelings. You have been aware how deeply they must have been wounded

[1] The invasion of Pomerania.

by the painful prospect of either seeing the interests of Sweden on the eve of being separated from those of France, or of being constrained to sacrifice the interests of a country by which I have been adopted with boundless confidence.

« Sire, though a Swede by honour, by duty, and by religion, I still identify myself, by my wishes, with that beautiful France, in which I was born, and which I have served faithfully ever since my childhood. Every step I take in Sweden, the homage I receive, revives in my mind those bright recollections of glory which were the principal cause of my elevation; nor do I disguise from myself, that Sweden, in chusing me, wished to pay a tribute of esteem to the French people. »

Napoleon blames all the world for his reverses. When he has no longer any one to blame, he accuses his destiny. But it his himself only whom he should blame; and the more so, because the very desertion on the part of his allies, which hastened his fall, could have had no other cause but the deep wounds he had inflicted by his despotic pride, and his acts of injustice. He was himself the original author of his misfortunes, by outraging those who had contributed to his elevation. It was his own hands that consummated his ruin; he was, in all the strictness of the term, a political suicide, and so much the more guilty, that he did not dispose of himself alone, but of France at the same time.

No. II.

EXTRACT FROM MANUSCRIPT OBSERVATIONS ON NAPOLEON'S RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN, BY AN ENGLISH OFFICER OF RANK.

Having examined into the probabilities of Ségur's allegation, that Buonaparte entertained thoughts of taking up his winter-quarters at Vitepsk, the military commentator proceeds as follows :—

« The Russian army at Smolensk, seeing the manner in which the French army was dispersed in cantonments between the rivers Dwina and Dneister, moved, on the 7th of August, towards Rudneia, in order to beat up their quarters. They succeeded in surprising those of Sébastiani, and did him a good deal of mischief in an attack upon Inkowo. In the mean time, Barclay de Tolly was alarmed by a movement made by the Viceroy about Souraj, on the Dwina; and he countermanded the original plan of operations, with a view to extend his right flank; and for some days afterwards, the Russian army made various false movements, and was in a considerable degree of confusion. Whether Napoleon's plan was founded upon the march of the Russian army from Smolensk, as supposed by Ségur, or upon their position at Smolensk in the first days of August, he carried it into execution, notwithstanding that march.

« Accordingly, he broke up his cantonments upon the Dwina on the 10th of August, and marched his army by different columns by corps across the front of the Russian army, from these cantonments to Rasassina, upon the Dnieper. The false movements made by the Russian army from the 7th to the 12th of August prevented their obtaining early knowledge of this march, and they were not in a situation to be able to take advantage of it. On the other hand, Napoleon could have had no knowledge of the miscalculated movements made by the Russian army.

« Being arrived at Rasassina, where he was joined by Davoust, with three divisions of the first corps, he crossed the Dnieper on the 14th. The corps of Poniatowski and Junot were at the same time moving upon Smolensk direct from Mohiloff.

« Napoleon moved forward upon Smolensk.

« The garrison of that place, a division of infantry under General Newerowskoi, had come out as far as Krasnoi, to observe the movements of the French troops on the left of the Dnieper, supposed to be advancing along the Dnieper from Orcsa. Murat attacked this body of troops with all his cavalry; but they made good their retreat to Smolensk,

although repeatedly charged in their retreat. These charges were of little avail, however; and this operation affords another instance of the security with which good infantry can stand the attack of cavalry. This division of about 6000 infantry had no artificial defence, excepting two rows of trees on each side of the road, of which they certainly availed themselves. But the use made even of this defence shows how small an obstacle will impede and check the operations of the cavalry.

« It would probably have been more advisable if Murat, knowing of the movement of Poniatowski and Junot directed from Mohiloff upon Smolensk, had not pushed this body of troops too hard. They must have been induced to delay on their retreat, in order effectually to reconnoitre their enemy. The fort would undoubtedly in that case have fallen into the hands of Poniatowski.

« On the 17th of August, Napoleon assembled the whole of the operating army before Smolensk, on the left of the Dnieper. It consisted as follows:—

The cavalry, under Murat,		40,000
Guards,		47,000
First Corps,	Davoust,	72,000
Third Corps,	Ney,	39,000
Fourth Corps,	the Viceroy,	45,000
Fifth Corps,	Poniatowski,	36,000
Eighth Corps,	Junot,	18,000
		297,000

« These corps had, about six weeks before, entered the country with the numbers above stated; they had had no military affair to occasion loss; yet Ségur says, they were now reckoned at 185,000. The returns of the 3d August are stated to have given the last numbers only.

« The town had been attacked on the 16th, first, by a battalion,—secondly, by a division of the third corps—which troops were repulsed. In the mean time, Bagration moved upon Katani, upon the Dnieper, having heard of Napoleon's movement from the Dwina; and Barclay de

Tolly having authorized the resumption of the plan of operations in pursuance of which the Russian army had broken up from Smolensk on the 17th. He moved thence on the 16th, along the right of the Dnieper, back upon Smolensk, and immediately reinforced the garrison. He was followed that night by Barclay de Tolly, who relieved the troops under the command of Bagration, which were in the town; and the whole Russian army was collected at Smolensk, on the right of the Dnieper.

« Bagration moved during the same night with his army on the road to Moscow. Barclay remained in support of the troops in Smolensk.

« Napoleon, after waiting till two o'clock, in expectation that Barclay would cross the Dnieper, and move out of Smolensk, to fight a general battle, attacked the town on the 17th with his whole army, and was repulsed with loss; and in the evening, the Russian troops recovered possession of all the outposts. Barclay, however, withdrew the garrison in the night of the 17th, and destroyed the bridges of communication between the French and the town. The enemy crossed the Dnieper by fords, and obtained for a moment possession of the faubourg called Petersburgh, on the right of that river, but were driven back. The Russian army, after remaining all day on the right of the river opposite Smolensk, retired on the night of the 18th; and the French that night repaired the bridges on the Dnieper.

« Before I proceed farther with the narrative, it is necessary to consider a little this movement of Napoleon, which is greatly admired by all the writers on the subject.

« When this movement was undertaken, the communication of the army was necessarily removed altogether from the Dwina. Instead of proceeding from Wilna upon Vitepsk, it proceeded from Wilna upon Minsk, where a great magazine was formed, and thence across the Beresina, upon Orcsa on the Dnieper, and thence upon Smolensk. The consequences of this alteration will appear presently, when we come to consider of the retreat.

« It is obvious, that the position of the great magazine at Minsk threw the communications of the army necessarily

upon the Beresina, and eventually within the influence of the operations of the Russian armies from the southward. Napoleon's objects by the movement might have been three: First, to force the Russians to a general battle; secondly, to obtain possession of Smolensk, without the loss or the delay of a siege; thirdly, to endeavour again to obtain a position in rear of the Russian army, upon their communications with Moscow, and with the southern provinces of the Russian empire. This movement is much admired, and extolled by the Russian as well as the French writers upon this war; yet if it is tried by the only tests of any military movement—its objects compared with its risks and difficulties, and its success compared with the same risks and difficulties, and with the probable hazards and the probably successful result of other movements to attain the same objects,—it will be found to have failed completely.

« The risk has been stated to consist, first, in the march of the different corps from their cantonments, on the Dwina, to Rasassina, on the Dnieper, across the front of the Russian army, without the protection of a body of troops formed for that purpose; and, next, in the hazard incurred in removing the communication of the army from Vitepsk to Minsk. This will be discussed presently.

« In respect of the first object,—that of bringing the Russian army to a general battle,—it must be obvious to every body, that the fort of Smolensk and the Dnieper river were between Napoleon and the Russian army when his movement was completed. Although, therefore, the armies were not only in sight, but within musket-shot of each other, it was impossible for Napoleon to bring the enemy to an action on that ground without his consent; and as the ground would not have been advantageous to the Russian army, and an unsuccessful, or even a doubtful result, could not have saved Smolensk, and there was no object sufficiently important to induce the Russian general to incur the risk of an unsuccessful result of a general action, it was not very probable he would move into the trap which Ségur describes as laid for

"Neither was it likely that Napoleon would take Smolensk by any assault which this movement might enable him to make upon that place. He had no heavy artillery, and he tried in vain to take the place by storm, first, by a battalion, then, by a division, and lastly, by the whole army. He obtained possession of Smolensk at last, only because the Russian general had made no previous arrangements for occupying the place; and because Barclay knew that, if he left a garrison there unprovided, it must fall into Napoleon's hands a few days sooner or later. The Russian general then thought proper to evacuate the place; and notwithstanding the position of Napoleon on the left of the Dnieper, and his attempts to take the place by storm, the Russian general would have kept the possession, if he could have either maintained the position of his own army in the neighbourhood, or could have supplied the place adequately before he retired from it.

"The possession of the place depended, then, on the position of the Russian army; and what follows will show, that other measures and movements than those adopted were better calculated to dislodge the Russian army from Smolensk.

"There can be no doubt that, upon Napoleon's arrival at Smolensk, he had gained six marches upon his enemy. If Napoleon, when he crossed the Dnieper at Rasassina, had masked Smolensk, and marched direct upon any point of the Dnieper above that place, he could have posted himself with his whole army upon the communications of his enemy with Moscow; and his enemy could scarcely have attempted to pass across his front, to seek the road by Kalouga. Barclay must have gone to the northward, evacuating or leaving Smolensk to its fate, and Napoleon might have continued his march upon Moscow, keeping his position constantly between his enemy and his communications with that city, and with the southern provinces. The fate of Smolensk could not have been doubtful.

"Here, then, a different mode, even upon the same plan of manœuvring, would have produced two of the

three objects which Napoleon is supposed to have had in view by these movements. But these were not the only movements in his power at that time. The Viceroy is stated to have been at Souraj and Velij. If, instead of moving by his right, Napoleon had moved by his left, and brought the first, fifth, and eighth corps from the Dnieper to form the reserve; and had marched from Souraj upon any point of the Upper Dnieper, he would equally have put himself in the rear of his enemy, and in a position to act upon his communications. He would have effected this object with greater certainty, if he had ventured to move the first, and the fifth and eighth corps through the country on the left of the Dnieper. And in this last movement there would have been no great risk, first, because Napoleon's manœuvres upon the Dwina would have attracted all the enemy's attention; secondly, because these corps would all have passed Smolensk, before the Russian generals could have known of their movement, in like manner as Napoleon passed the Dnieper and arrived at Smolensk without their knowledge. By either of these modes of proceeding, Napoleon would have cut off his enemy from their communications, would have obliged them to fight a battle to regain these communications, and in all probability Smolensk would have fallen into his hands without loss, with its buildings entire—an object of the last consequence in the event of the campaign.

« Either of these last modes of effecting the object would have been shorter by two marches than the movement of the whole army upon Rasassina. »

END OF VOL. VII.